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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THE League Council finished its humiliating performance last Saturday. Its boldest action was an expression of sympathy with China. Lord Halifax and M. Bonnet failed to dispose of Abyssinia. The so-called "decision" which was reached was nothing more than the Chairman's statement that it was evidently the desire of most Council members to be free to recognise or not recognise the Italian occupation. Meanwhile Abyssinia still remains a member of the League, and the ghost will doubtless appear to disturb the banquet at the Assembly in September. Nor did Lord Halifax carry the Council with him on the Spanish question. He was supported by the votes only of France, Poland and Rumania in his opposition to Señor del Vayo's eloquent and powerful demand for the abandonment of "non-intervention." There was a good deal of melancholy discussion about Switzerland's claim to "neutrality"—i.e., to be exempt from obligations under Article 16 of the Covenant. In the end the claim was agreed to, with the hope that this will not be a precedent. Finally, Chile, disgusted by the delay in reforming (that is to say, emasculating) the Covenant, announced her intention of withdrawing from the League. A fine week's work!

Mussolini and France

The French no doubt were not altogether happy at the role of Lord Halifax's henchmen which they had to play at Geneva. To the fate of Abyssinia M. Daladier's Government may be as indifferent as Mr. Chamberlain's. But Spain is another matter. And, in all the circumstances, Mussolini's speech at Genoa on Saturday was particularly galling—as well as ominous. Italy's friendship with Great Britain he was pleased to regard as assured; but an agreement with France might present much more difficulty, for France and Italy were "on opposite sides of the barricade in Spain." "They want the victory of Barcelona; we want Franco to win," he said. Coupled with this there were significant phrases about the ideological unity of Italy and Germany. Was that a warning that the Duce's attitude on the Czechoslovakian question, and what is closely connected with it—French relations with Soviet Russia—is going to be much more exacting than had been hoped? And did the speech as a whole indicate that his game now is to divide Britain and France? That is how a great many people in France have read it. The discussions between Count Ciano and M. Blondel, the French Ambassador in Rome, have not begun as we write. When they do, it looks as if Mussolini is going to propound stiff terms for an agreement—stiffer perhaps than France can possibly accept. He not only wants his

victory in Spain; he is in a hurry for it. And his anger at the stubborn resistance of the Republic is driving him into more intransigent courses.

South Africa Polls

The general election in the South African Union took place on Wednesday. The final results are not to hand as we go to press; but there can be no doubt of the Government's victory. The United Party (a fusion, after the election of 1933, of General Hertzog's Nationalist Party and the South African Party led by General Smuts) has had five years in office with an overwhelming majority. It was expected to come back with smaller numbers, but with a still handsome majority. Its principal challengers were the "purified" Nationalists under Dr. Malan, who, though they numbered only 21 in the last Parliament, appeared to be making some headway, and counted on being stronger in the next. They are fundamentally a "Farmers'" party, and they went to the country on a thoroughly reactionary programme—"anti-British, anti-Semite, anti-Native," as General Hertzog summarised it. The other Opposition groups do not count very seriously. They are the Dominionites—who are in a perpetual stew about the solidarity of the Empire, and suspect not merely Dr. Malan but General Hertzog and General Smuts of secessionist designs—and the Labour Party, which is mainly concerned in upholding the interests of the minority of privileged white workers. The Natives, it should be observed, who number about 6½ millions out of the total population of about 9½ millions in the Union, have no part in this election. Their utterly inadequate representation in Parliament is arranged for otherwise.

Britain, Mexico and the U.S.A.

There is a curious concatenation of circumstances in the fact that diplomatic relations between Britain and Mexico should have been broken off just at a moment when reports, so far unconfirmed, have spoken of plans to attempt a counter-revolution under the leadership of General Cedillo. True, the Mexican Government took the initiative in recalling its Minister from London; but the step was taken under considerable provocation. Not content with impugning the impartiality of the Mexican Supreme Court in the bellicose Note delivered on the subject of Mexican Eagle oil properties, the British Government, in a Note last week peremptorily demanding payment of an overdue instalment of £18,000 in respect of 1910-20 damage claims, appears to have lectured Mexico somewhat magisterially on the subject of indebtedness, internal as well as external. There is no reason to suspect Whitehall of deliberately fomenting a Fascist rising against President Cardenas; but it is an open secret that such a development would be looked on with favour in the City, even if a successful counter-revolution meant one more recruit for the Berlin-Rome "Axis." It would, however, be highly unwelcome in Washington, where Britain's domineering attitude towards Mexico is regarded with some misgiving. In American eyes, as President Cardenas has acidly observed, Britain—with no better excuse than Mexico—is a defaulter in regard to external obligations. Whatever Wall Street's views might be, Mr. Roosevelt has no desire to see European capitalists picking chestnuts out of the Mexican fire at the cost of bringing Fascism up to the Texas border.

The U.A.B. Debate

The debate in the Commons on the votes for the Ministry of Labour and the Unemployment Assistance Board gave the Opposition its chance of protesting against the wholesale withdrawal by the U.A.B. of the supplementary allowances granted in the winter to 260,000 of its 592,000 applicants. The reply of the U.A.B. is that the grants were intended to meet winter hardship and the higher cost of living, and that since they were made warmer weather has come back and the cost of living fallen. But according to the figures announced this week the cost of living at the end of April was 56 per cent. above the 1914 level, as compared with 54 per cent. a month ago and 52 per cent. the same time last year. At the time when the increased allowances were given the figure was 58 per cent.; but the difference is obviously too small to account for their discontinuance. It must be assumed that what the U.A.B. really intends—as indeed it has announced—is to discriminate in future between summer and winter rates. There is something to be said in favour of this; but the question is whether the rates as they now stand are adequate, even in summer, in face of the present cost of living. At the very least, full use should be made of the Board's discretionary power to grant additional allowances wherever the withdrawal of the grants made last winter is likely to cause hardship.

Official Secrets

The Home Secretary's statement in the matter of the Official Secrets Acts is far from being wholly reassuring. He promised that the Attorney-General's fiat and the use of the special powers of interrogation under the Acts, will be confined to cases of "serious public importance." But he asserted, unconvincingly, that the Acts could not be so amended as to define the sort of "official secret" which must be guarded. That is, the Government declines to give up a weapon entrusted to it by Parliament for the specific purpose of dealing with espionage and now capable of being used, as in the recent *Lewis v. Cattle* case, to interfere seriously with the liberty of the press. It is, or used to be, a sound principle of British law that the safety of the realm is the one reason justifying a veil of secrecy over the acts of State officials. The Courts have now ruled that under the Act of 1920 a trivial police circular may be an "official secret." The same rule might easily restrict proper discussion of many official activities in whose case publication would in no way menace the security of the Commonwealth, whereas secrecy might allow far-reaching encroachments on civil liberties to pass unobserved. Sir Samuel Hoare assures us that this is not his intention. But Brutus, too, was an honourable man.

The Trade Unions and Dilution

The Amalgamated Engineering Union, in company with thirty-six smaller Unions—mostly members of the Confederation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trade Unions—will meet the employers next week to discuss the question of speeding up armament production. It does not appear, though they have reasonably agreed to hear what the employers have to say, that they will be in at all an accommodating mood if they are asked to agree to any sort of dilution of labour. There are two reasons for this—apart from the special reasons which the Unions

have to feel suspicious—on account of the Government's importunate handling of the problem. First, the A.E.U., and also the other Unions organising skilled workers, find themselves faced with increasing unemployment among their members engaged in ordinary commercial work: so that there is, they claim, plenty of skilled labour already available, if only the employers will use it. Secondly, aircraft production, in which the main difficulty exists, cannot without extreme danger be subjected to mass methods based on the use of unskilled labour. If there is a shortage of skilled aircraft workers, it must be met by the use of skilled men now in other branches of engineering, and not by the introduction of unskilled "trainees." Moreover, if the employers have questions to raise, so have the Unions. They want assurances that their shop stewards and committees shall be recognised and collective bargaining effectively applied whenever workshop methods or systems of payment are to be changed.

London Replanned

The scheme for highway development in the Greater London area which Sir Charles Bressey has prepared, with Sir Edwin Lutyens as his consultant, has two great merits. It deals comprehensively with the London traffic problem as one which affects the lives of the whole population in an area the circumference of which cuts through Birmingham, Norwich, Dover and Southampton; and its authors have recognised that no solution will avail which does not relieve congestion in Central London. The plan's broad principles are sound. Pressure of traffic in the City is to be relieved by extending the Embankment from Blackfriars to the Tower (with a similar extension westwards from Chelsea to Putney Bridge) and by forming a loop-way north of the Mansion House. A mid-central loop-way would be formed by linking the present North Circular Road to a South Circular route. An outer orbital road would pass through Hatfield, Egham, Reigate and Dartford. These three rings would be connected with new thoroughfares (including some tunnels and viaducts) driven across the central circle. The scheme is immense and will be costly. Its completion is estimated to require at least thirty years. But, in view of the intolerable delays and waste involved in London's present traffic congestion, the sooner a beginning is made with development of communications on these lines, the better.

Aristocratic Britain

We are from time to time forcibly reminded of the extent to which Great Britain, despite the mass-creation of new rich since the Industrial Revolution, remains an aristocratic country. The Marquess of Bute has sold a part only of his properties in and near Cardiff for a sum which rumour has put at twenty million pounds. His mineral rights and properties, his manorial rights, and five of his castles are excluded from the sale, which nevertheless includes half of Cardiff and a portion of the neighbouring town of Penarth. Lord Bute's is doubtless an extreme case; but there are other magnates, such as Lord Londonderry, who still preserve enormous territorial influence in highly developed industrial areas. Lord Derby is still the uncrowned king of Lancashire; and it is not without significance that there are since the latest reshuffle two Stanleys in the most aristocratic Cabinet of modern times. The present Prime Minister is of the new rich; but the composition of his Cabinet bears witness to the success with which the old rich have held their own in the partnership of power begun with the Reform Act of 1832.

American Labour in the Law Courts

It seemed a few weeks ago as if the American employers were succeeding in their efforts to sabotage the new National Labour Relations Board set up under the Wagner Act. But now, in three separate cases, the Supreme Court has come down on the side of the Board. It has disallowed an anti-strike injunction issued by a Circuit Court; it has upheld a Board order requiring the reinstatement of a number of strikers who had been victimised; and it has summoned members of the Philadelphia Circuit Court to appear before it to show reason for the Court's action in refusing the Board permission to rectify a mistake in the form of its suit against the Republic Steel Company. These are notable successes for the Labour Relations Board; and in another case the Federal Government has taken what may prove to be a supremely important initiative in prosecuting a large number of mining concerns and officers of the law on a charge of conspiring to terrorise the mine-workers by murder, kidnapping and various forms of intimidation in order to prevent Trade Unionism from obtaining a foothold. The Wagner Act itself provides only for civil enforcement; but in the mining case the Government is using an Act passed originally for the purpose of dealing with the Ku Klux Klan, and never previously invoked for preventing industrial intimidation.

Press and Public

At the conclusion of the very useful and thorough Report on the British Press issued by P.E.P. (16 Queen Anne's Gate, 10*s.* 6*d.*) we read that the relationship between the press and the public is reciprocal: "The tastes, intelligence and economic status of the reader govern the press quite as firmly as the press by its selection and treatment of the news and features, moulds the opinions of the public." Certainly popular newspapers cater for the tastes, even if they do not flatter the intelligence, of their public; certainly the economic status of the reader governs the press, to a far greater extent than its readers themselves know, by dictating the type of advertising which is again reflected in the tone and policy of the paper. Certainly too the mass circulation press has an important effect on the mind of the public. But does it mould opinion? In a crisis, it is true, mobilised to harmonise with the B.B.C. the national press may smother criticism, and silence almost entirely the small voice of reason. But it is also true that the public takes increasingly little notice of the political views of some of the papers it buys most readily. A large proportion of the readers of the national press look to it passively for entertainment; in political issues strong currents of feeling and opinion awake in the country and are eventually, in spite of every effort to keep them down, reflected in the newspapers. It will be interesting, for instance, to watch the modifications in the attitude of the *Daily Herald* if pressure for some form of "popular front" grows in the constituencies.

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CABINET RESHUFFLE

HOWEVER grim the international setting, it would be churlish to deny the comic spirit leave to shoot a few silvery arrows of laughter at the latest play staged on the boards of Westminster. Ministerial exits have rarely been more decorously effected, or political drawing-room comedy in the best English tradition interpreted by the actors with greater restraint or more reverence for old school tie sensibilities. The impresario, kept momentarily away from the footlights by a distressful attack of the gout which afflicted the Earl of Chatham, admittedly had luck. Mr. Ormsby Gore's succession to the peerage was most convenient. It enabled Mr. Chamberlain to write off from his Cabinet balance-sheet the liability of an unsuccessful, now ennobled, Colonial Secretary, and—still on the brave democratic plea that balance as between Lords and Commons must be redressed—to put new brooms to work in the much criticised Air Ministry. How fortunate to achieve so much without stultifying repeated declarations that all was well with R.A.F. expansion or casting reflection on a Minister who happened to be the Premier's close friend as well as a member of the Upper House! Lord Swinton, in terms of warmest amity, asks "my dear Neville," now that the Ministry's programme for the next two years is smoothly in train, to replace him by a Minister who can account personally to the Commons for the heavy expenditure which the programme will entail. The Prime Minister, after duly appreciative eulogy of "my dear Philip's" achievement and public spirit, reluctantly agrees. Exit Lord Swinton; enter Sir Kingsley Wood, metal of no great weight but efficient in administration, and skilful in handling the popular press. The comedy's dénouement is virtually complete; the consequential reshuffle of portfolios—Mr. MacDonald to the Colonial Office, Lord Stanley to the Dominions, Mr. Elliot to the Health Ministry, and Colonel Colville to the Secretaryship for Scotland—has secondary importance. The curtain falls, with Mr. Churchill—*persona ingratissima* to a humdrum Cabinet—still off the Ministerial stage.

And so what? The critics in the parliamentary audience—or, at least, on the Government benches—have been adequately disarmed. Signifying no more than a temporarily expedient move, the Cabinet reshuffle has been sufficiently extensive to create the traditional first nighters' atmosphere of indulgence. "The new team deserves better than recriminations about the past, and should receive wholehearted co-operation in its essential task of producing greater and swifter results." Thus the *Times*, whose strictures on Air Ministry shortcomings had been, less than a week before, a formidable indictment, not merely of Lord Swinton, but of the Government as a whole. There is little doubt that Parliament, when the postponed debate on the Opposition motion for an Air Inquiry takes place, will endorse the view that the new pianist must not be shot. He will do his best, and may play well.

But will he? Will he even do better than the Ministerial Buggins who has "had his turn" and has now, with public-school chivalry, vacated the stool? For laymen it is far from easy to appraise fairly Lord Swinton's performance. On the one hand there are the critics who point to what, they allege, is an unchallengeable lead secured by Germany in the air. Lord Lothian declared in the Upper House last week that Germany would have next year 8,000 first-line aeroplanes, with anything from 4,000 to 7,000 machines in reserve. Equally despondent, Sir Hugh Seely told the Commons that German production was between 5,000 and 6,000 'planes a year. Against these figures the British Government's statement that the programme for producing, by March, 1939, a first-line strength of 1,750 machines, with reserves unspecified, is "up to schedule," does not impress; and Lord Winterton's promise that the metropolitan force will be 2,370 'planes strong by March, 1940, is a promise, and no more. The parity with any European aggressor to which Lord Baldwin pledged the Government recedes into the immeasurable distance.

It may well be a mistake to jump to the conclusion that the alarmists are in all respects right. Granted that German aeroplane production quantitatively exceeds our own ! may even be likely always to surpass it, the layman is in no position to answer the pertinent questions whether the air force of the Reich is mechanically as efficient as the British, or whether Germany has a reserve of trained pilots commensurate with her accumulation of air force material. Irrespective of reservations concerning the alignment of British foreign policy and the use to which accumulated armaments may be put, it must be conceded that British Air Force expansion is proceeding on a scale which, three years ago, would have been denounced by the Left as aggressive and applauded by the Right as an earnest of Britannia's determination to be mistress of the skies as well as of the seas.

If people ask to-day whether it is "adequate" or not, the only possible answer is that armaments are a function of policy and that in a state of anarchy there can be no standard of adequacy. A Government which both repudiates all attempts at building up a system of collective security and then announces its intention of defending a very vulnerable and scattered Empire, single handed, contemplates a war in which no possible rearmament can give security. In such a plight as this the average elector will probably blame the Government and the Air Ministry for sins both of omission and commission. It may be that Germany has achieved mass-production of aeroplanes at the expense of quality. It is safer to conclude from the available evidence that the Air Ministry's organisation on the supply side has been sadly defective, that this country's considerable engineering resources have been handicapped by lack of Ministerial vision in planning for adequate supplies of machine tools and skilled labour, by undue multiplicity of approved designs and irregularity of orders and, above all, by Governmental reluctance to interfere, in peace time, with the normal, and profitable, course of "business as usual" in the engineering trades.

There lies the real crux of the rearmament issue—and not only in the air. In a medley of unproved, but seemingly circumstantial charges—bottle-necks in the flow of essential components, frictions between Air Ministry and manufacturers, tardy deliveries (sometimes minus the full installation of instruments) of ordered, counter-ordered and reordered machines—part of the blame may be ascribed to pardonable failure to foresee the full extent of the strain which would be laid on firms whose technical efficiency is in many cases open to question. But the real reason why the efficiency of totalitarian Germany

in rearming has not been equalled by pseudo-democratic Britain is that a ruling class, not consciously pro-Fascist, but concerned primarily to preserve an inherited social structure of privilege and profit, has shrunk from nationalising or drastically regimenting the armament industries. The consequence has been a disarray of muddle, waste and profiteering, for which blame rests in part (it may be) on the Air Ministry—and is the War Office in better shape?—but in the main on the Cabinet's collective decisions.

Sir Kingsley Wood may cut a more popularly reassuring figure in the sphere of air rearmament; but we doubt if any changes in the Chamberlain Cabinet will impress Marshal Göring. Even if the Government decided to mobilise the nation's "war potential" as it was mobilised by Mr. Lloyd George a score or so of years ago, its complacency towards aggression would presumably continue. Men of moderate ability can do great things if they have a clear vision of their purpose; exceptional men can equal such achievements even if the objective is undescried. Mr. Chamberlain's Cabinet has neither the one attribute nor the other—neither genius nor policy. On the drab beaches of Governmental mediocrity which Westminster has washed up, Lord Swinton is, so demonstrably, not the only pebble.

JAPAN'S FAILURE—I.

[This article and the one that will follow it next week are from a correspondent who is now living in North China and who has an intimate knowledge of the country.]

THE Japanese have three main problems. One is to shut off the parts of China which they have overrun from the rest of the world, to create a vacuum as far as news, and to some extent as trade, is concerned. Another, which is essential for the conduct of the war as well as for purposes of future pacification, is to secure effective political control of the areas actually occupied, that is, the big cities and the railway system, including a belt of territory about five miles each side of the lines. Last, and most important of all, is the task of extending their control over the hinterland which lies between the railways and behind the Japanese front line. The problems are stated in the order in which the Japanese have been successful in solving them, not in the order of the importance or difficulty.

Once the Imperial Army has destroyed organised opposition the methods of conquest depend mainly on the Japanese bureaucracy. A bureaucracy uncontrolled by public opinion may be a nuisance at home, but it is a powerful instrument for oppression abroad. Presented with the problem of isolating China from the rest of the world the Japanese bring to their task the experience not only of their own country but also of Korea and Manchuria. Within a few days of military occupation they turn the whole of the area into a strictly controlled territory from which it is difficult to send news and in which it is almost impossible to get reliable information. Their chief reliance is upon control of communications—that is upon control of transportation, of the press, the mails, the film, radio, theatre and education.

Physical communications were naturally taken over first, but it is calculated that the unusually high proportion of two-thirds of the Japanese armies now in China are engaged in defending them. Next came the press and the censorship of mails. Those who knew the Chinese press are not likely to waste much sentiment on this, for apart from the *Ta Kung Pao*, the "Manchester Guardian" of China, there was no nation-wide paper of high standing. Most papers were of low grade and technically inefficient. Circulations were modest; even the *Ta Kung Pao*, some thirty years old, boasted of no more than 50,000 copies in Tientsin and 10,000 in Shanghai. But during the last few months the Chinese press has changed its character completely. In Japanese controlled areas a large number of Chinese newspapers, particularly those without a sound financial basis, as well as the more important dailies which lost their experienced personnel, have disappeared. The press which remains is strictly controlled. After eliminating all those persons who might take the initiative in anti-Japanese activities—and the number of arrests has been considerable—the Japanese promulgated and strictly enforced a set of censorship regulations, nominally the decrees of Chinese puppet administrations, concerning the press, film, theatre and even gramophone records. By this means they secure a platform for propaganda as well as the machinery with which to prevent the expression of pro-Chinese or anti-Japanese sentiments. Since these regulations came into force the Chinese press has become so colourless and uniform that the circulation has dropped, an unlooked for consequence which has been met by measures forcing people to subscribe.

There is one gap in the system of censorship and control. It is caused by the presence in China of correspondents and news agencies which belong to countries enjoying rights of extraterritoriality, particularly England and America. This is the struggle which is going on now in Shanghai, where resistance to the Japanese censorship is stronger than it has been in Peking or Tientsin. But more serious for the Japanese are the foreign embassies which have their own radio stations through which they can send and receive messages and some of which handle messages for newspaper correspondents. Nothing can be done about the embassies, but the concessions are the object of persistent attack. Things are made as difficult as possible for foreign correspondents by censorship of the mails, the radio and telegraph, by personal intimidation and temporary arrests. Foreign owned newspapers published in China find their offices continually being attacked by bomb throwers. But so far the gap in the censorship system remains, a gap which has done the Japanese considerable harm.

Meanwhile, every attempt is made to counteract the effect of this failure to convert occupied China into a completely controlled area by extending the scope of Japanese propaganda. In education, the middle schools are rigidly supervised and provided with new textbooks. The three Japanese journals in Shanghai have been amalgamated in order to co-ordinate their work, and a Chinese edition added to extend their circulation. *Domei*, the official Japanese news agency, formed by amalgamating *Nippon Dempo* and *Rengo* in 1937, shortly before the outbreak of hostilities, has enlarged its Japanese, Chinese and English news services and has by now probably the most extensive network of correspondents in the Far East. *Domei* is aiming at the elimination of all foreign news services in China, especially of Reuters, which is now, of course, thoroughly censored, at least in the occupied areas. But even if the press in the foreign concessions is brought under control in the near future, there will still be the outlet through the embassies to the outside world.

The comparative success of the Japanese in controlling intellectual communications in the occupied areas has not been matched by any corresponding success in solving the political problem. The main political objective of the Japanese armies is the elimination of the Kuomintang. But something must be put in its place. It is not enough merely to set up the organs of government, as has been done, in Peking and Nanking; there must be a new political philosophy to take the place of Sun Yat Sen's Three Principles of the People. It does not matter whether the conquered population believes this philosophy or not, but they must at least pay lip service to it and allow their children to be brought up in its principles. The new political theory gives an air of legitimacy to the bare facts of military conquest; it is designed to maintain Japanese and undermine Chinese morale. The recent refusal of Japanese troops to destroy Chinese villages is an indication that mere love of conquest and destruction does not carry troops through an arduous campaign. And what happens in the

"ideological front" is important not only for the larger political problem of government but also for the future expansion from the railways to the hinterland. The fate of the Japanese attempt to rule China through puppet regimes will vary not only with the tide of battle, but with the reaction to political propaganda.

The Hsin Min Huei, or New People's Society, sits crowned on the grave of the Kuomintang. Several months of propaganda culminated in March in what was called a T'o Tang Huei, or "Leaving the Kuomintang" Movement. Former members were given the opportunity of publicly celebrating their resignations, nor was the joy of the occasion marred by any threats against those who failed to do so. And those who teach the young have naturally been given every chance to learn about the principles of the Hsin Min Huei so that there shall be no time lost in transmitting them to the rising generation. A Hsin Min University has graduated sixty students after four months' training and sent them to finishing schools in Japan; this is the beginnings of a new Chinese bureaucracy. Indeed it is difficult to over-estimate the importance of the Hsin Min Huei to the Japanese in their effort to control thought, intimidate the intellectuals and discredit the Kuomintang. They do not expect large numbers of people to join the movement and they are well aware that every Chinese knows that it is a thin cover for Japan's real purposes. It is too early therefore to make any guess as to its political future; it is enough to examine its principles and purposes for the light they throw on the Japanese mind and methods.

The Hsin Min Huei preaches what is called the New People's Principle. The principle but not the name is new. Hsin Min is a term with many associations; it means, in Chinese historical contexts, to conquer a people and regenerate them. Liang Ch'i Ch'iao used the term to mean "patriot." It has no association with the Kuomintang. The Hsin Min principle is an extraordinary addition to the intellectual life of the world. According to this principle all things like to live but have varying powers of resistance; the good are strong and the weak are bad; Heaven allows the good to grow and weak to die. It is bound up with the Kingly Way, which includes getting rid of selfishness, making sure of right knowledge and avoiding Marxism, being sincere, regulating the heart, and being correct in the important relations, such as those between husband and wife, parents and children, for those who do not understand these things follow the class war. Western equality between men and women is opposed to the will of Heaven; hence the foolishness of the three Sung sisters ruling China. In politics, government and religion must be combined. In Western countries capitalists support parties which control the government and run it for their own private profit; but Italian experience shows that one-party government can be good if the leader is good. The voice of the Japanese peasant in uniform can be traced in what follows: the Hsin Min Principle will do away with capitalist monopoly, it will make machines fit men, not men fit machines, it will do away with big cities and all their evils and take machinery to the villages, it will think first of the profit of the people, not of the capitalist.

The most important aspect of Japanese policy that this rather involved "principle" throws light upon is one not always properly emphasised, that is, the danger to Japanese institutions of a China which is culturally becoming more and more American and English and is basing its nationalism on anti-Japanese feeling. Chiang Kai-shek cannot be forgiven because, according to the Hsin Min principle, he stole authority, destroyed old Chinese culture, and formed an alliance with the Communists. China must go back, according to the same argument, to Confucius; the Japanese are shedding their blood because China did not have the strength to resist the West. English has already been replaced by Japanese as a second language. And the revival of Confucianism is going forward in an attempt to enlist the support of Chinese who disliked the Kuomintang and disapproved of the new styles in marriage and the break up of the old family system. It is a powerful appeal, but it appeals to the old, not to the young; in fact, to make a very conservative estimate, there is nothing in the Hsin Min Principle which appeals to any Chinese below the age of forty. And in China a man is old at fifty.

The aims of the Hsin Min Huei are clearer than its principles. They are, to protect the authority of the Provisional Government, to develop the resources of China, which is naturally rich but lacking in capital and technique, to plan for Sino-Japanese peace on the basis of Confucianism, to join in opposition to the Kuomintang and the Communists, and lastly, to form alliances with friendly peoples such as those of Japan, Manchukuo and Mengjukuo. China's resources together with Japan's armies will make it possible, it is claimed, to oppose the U.S.S.R. and avoid being a colony of the Western powers. These aims are frank and intelligible, they are a representative statement of what the Japanese would like to do. But they are not good propaganda, even among the extensive reactionary groups which undoubtedly exist, from whom so much was hoped and so little received. It was the object of the conquest, the attempt to eliminate not only the government but every new idea which had taken root in China since the coming of the West, which demanded the creation of a Hsin Min Huei and the elaboration of a new political theory. But the very object of the conquest guarantees its ultimate failure. It is an impossible task to set up a new government over the whole of China, to undo all the education of the last twenty-five years and restore the social and political ideas of the 5th century B.C. to a country of four hundred million people, while exploiting them with the methods of the 20th century A.D. Yet these are the aims that the Japanese army has set itself to achieve.

A LONDON DIARY

THE Labour Party Executive has at length had the good sense to answer the demand for a Peace Alliance or Popular Front with arguments instead of with contempt. Certain phrases in the document suggest that it may even have been written by someone with sympathy for the proposal it rejects. Further, it admits that, in certain circumstances of emergency, an alliance with other parties might be good. But the manifesto confines itself to the question of a *national* electoral pact; it does not discuss the possibility of *local* pacts in particular constituencies, such as Mid-Bucks or North Oxon, though this is in fact the only sort of electoral arrangement that most advocates of the "People's Front" propose. Nor does the manifesto discuss the other real issue—the amount of freedom Labour Party members are to be allowed to collaborate with members of other parties on particular issues, such as Spain. These evasions are in themselves an improvement; Transport House finds excellent reasons for rejecting a national scheme that none of us propose, but it no longer talks of pains and penalties against those who are willing to work with anyone, from Conservative to Communist, to help Spain and prevent Mr. Chamberlain from turning the British lion into a jackal for the Fascists.

* * *

If Mr. Churchill were not a very intelligent man with an unusually good understanding of the situation in Central Europe, I should be sceptical about his optimistic remarks after seeing Henlein in London. Optimism about an enduring settlement that follows an interview with a Nazi leader is dangerous. Hitler has always been conciliatory towards anyone who might otherwise help those whom he intends to stab in the stomach next day. Henlein, constantly in touch with Hitler, has learnt something of the same technique. In December, 1935, he addressed Chatham House. It was a most moderate speech, dealing only with the grievances of the Sudeten Germans. Henlein denied any connection with Hitler. He was no National Socialist. After a number of intermediate stages he has reached his now unmistakably Nazi position and a few weeks ago put forward a series of demands—some reasonable,

others unacceptable by any State which desires to maintain its independence. At this point Mr. Arthur Henderson, M.P., who was paying a visit to Czechoslovakia, saw Henlein. Like Mr. Churchill, he came away much encouraged. There should be no difficulty about a settlement, he said; Henlein had assured him that these demands were his *maximum* programme. The Czechs, who were entertaining Henderson and who knew the Nazis, smiled. On May Day—about a week after Henderson's departure—Henlein made another speech in which he declared that these Karlsbad demands were his *minimum* demands. The Czechs smiled more broadly still. It is wise to take a long spoon with you when you sup with National Socialists. However, Mr. Churchill has experience and is not to be confused with Arthur Henderson, and he makes a good point when he says that the Sudeten Germans know that they would be the greatest sufferers in a Czech-German war. But I should like his opinion about the danger of pressure from within and without so weakening the Czechs that they become unwilling vassals of the Nazis.

* * *

We should know fairly soon whether Hitler's instructions to Henlein are to accept, for the time at least, a settlement inside the Czechoslovak State. This week negotiations begin between him and the Czech Government. If Henlein has been told to accept status within the structure of the Czech Constitution, the negotiations should soon reach success. For the Czechs are prepared to go a very long way indeed to meet Henlein; and the Premier, Mr. Hodza, as I found in conversation the other day, is a very conciliatory man. He is a Slovak with "Minority" experience and desires nothing so much as equal rights for minorities. Many Czechs think him likely to be too conciliatory to the Sudeten Germans. Mr. Hodza—with the full support of Mr. Benes, who has always worked for an understanding with Germany—will go just as far as he can; and though the Czech public may get restive, the Government's authority (the Government's authority, that is, as long as President Benes backs it) will enable it to go to all lengths short of upsetting the integrity of the State. The Government is offering all the Minorities full local self-government and cultural autonomy: it is also proposing extensive economic reforms, including more money for public works and a fairer distribution of unemployment relief. If Henlein wants reforms and the redress of grievances he can certainly get them; if the negotiations break down it will only be because Henlein (or rather Hitler) doesn't want them to succeed. I too am hopeful that they are now prepared, for the time at least, to accept a settlement.

* * *

I think it is the title that has made the American public so excited about Quincey Howe's *England Expects Every American To Do His Duty* (now published in Britain at 8*s*. 6*d*. by Robert Hale). It is a good title, neatly fitting the isolationist mood that blames Britain for dragging America into the war. (It goes deeper than that too; it touches off that irritable spot so many Americans have about England—a spot that always reacts to any suggestion that English people may still feel themselves in some way "superior" because of their age, public schools, cathedrals, ruins and what not.) Considered as a book it seems to me to botch a fine thesis. The thesis should be that certain groups of American and British capital work closely together and have a great deal of power; that these interests naturally made for American co-operation with Britain in the last war and have often made for co-operation since (though they often failed to achieve it), and that if there is to be American-British co-operation it would be well to ground it on something more stable than the interests of the House of Morgan or the Northcliffe war propaganda which has acted as a boomerang ever since. But Mr. Howe cannot see it like that; he lives in a Hollywood world of plots and sinister agencies, in which a simple, innocent guy, called America, is led up the garden and deluded, robbed, beaten and murdered by a clever, determined villain called Britain.

Actually, one of the very oddest sides of a very odd period of diplomacy has been Britain's apparent willingness to let American relations look after themselves. One would have thought the inevitable corollary of letting Europe go hang would be a determined effort to get straight with the U.S.A. True, we are now trying to buy American aeroplanes. But why not follow the Irish settlement with a debt settlement with the United States? Perhaps that is coming? In any case, I hear from one visitor after another about the devastating effect of our apparent fondness for Fascist dictators, and we do not seem to do much on the wireless to counteract the bad impression. I have just seen an interesting letter from the United States, expressing deep gratitude for a present of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, which, the writer remarks, is particularly valuable because the news provided for the American public by the British wireless consists of very carefully edited and compressed news about Europe, very full information about the United States, culled from American commentators, and detailed reports about the English weather!

* * *

"And she said, 'Have you any mustard?' 'Yes,' I said, 'I have, but I daren't sell it you on a Sunday morning.' 'What a shop!' she said and went out of the place as if it was my fault. Then another person came in and asked for biscuits. 'Sorry, ma'am,' I says, 'I can't serve you with biscuits in the shop.' 'Why ever not?' she says. 'You'd better ask the police that,' I says. 'The best I can do, if you want them that bad, will be to give you a packet in the tea room at the back. Then if we break open the packet I expect you can take those you don't eat away with you.' 'I never heard such rubbish in my life,' she says and marched out thinking me off my rocker. It's not good for trade and no use to anyone that I can see, these regulations." I tried to explain that they might be useful to someone, if not to her. It might suit me to drive on the right side of the road and yet the law might justifiably stop me. If she sold biscuits in her teashop on Sundays, would not all the grocers demand the right to keep their shop assistants selling biscuits overtime? No, she didn't see it. She was a lonely woman, and had to make her living, didn't she? And she had an old father and mother to keep, hadn't she? Why should anyone interfere with her selling what she liked to whom she liked? Her theory was that a lot of these people in Parliament who made these laws had shares in the big shops and were trying to shut down all the little shops. A dangerous line of thought, I felt, coming from a recognisable source. This was a conversation at a small shop in a country town. I find exactly the same exasperation with the shop regulations in London. The delicatessen shops in the small streets—the most friendly and useful shops—are altogether shut down on Sundays now, while the woman in a dairy not far off is half crazy with the contradictions and absurdities. Cooked food and milk, yes—but a bit of bread to a customer who has run short on a Sunday, no, not even though it's there in the shop for everyone to see! What else can you do with such a law except break it? You can get bread in a milk-can if she knows you well.

CRITIC.

"SALES REPRESENTATIVE"

IN a London daily of the sober type readers may have noticed scores of attractively worded "smalls" which offer to a man of ambition, energy and unquestioned integrity (and preferably with a public school education) the prospect of an important executive post in some rapidly expanding sales organisation. Probably they do not connect this advertisement with the abusive semi-illiterate or the sleek, shinily tailored, down-at-heel, suède-shoed play-boy, who hawks inferior goods on their doorstep.

"Speciality selling" in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred is the last refuge of the man who is "on his back," and the

posts offered him are unlimited. Makers of various "consumers' goods" are dragooning the dregs of the employment exchanges, crooks and a lot of unhappy déclassés ranging from gigolos to broken rubber-planters and "unplaced" University men. Every artifice is employed to secure members for their "sales forces." The inducements quoted above are typical—that the necessity of hawking commodities from door to door as a necessary prelude to executive responsibility is omitted.

After having relinquished a teaching post, I visited, in turn, and with diminishing hope, the addresses of these advertisers. Usually, there would be two or three dispirited and obviously unemployed individuals awaiting interviews. These were the old hands at this game, but the uninitiated like myself would question, in subdued tones, the possibility of securing a job. We need not have feared. We did not know that not one man in a hundred stayed for more than three or four weeks, or that every man on the south coast had "walked out" on a "door-to-door" company the previous week, or that the company was engaging minors whose signatures were not even valid on a hire-purchase agreement.

Many of these firms talk of "commencing salaries," "immediate remuneration," or "car supplied." In the case of one company selling a household gadget, "commencing salary" means that one receives 24*s*. a week for two weeks only. "Immediate remuneration" means remuneration immediately one can sell a speciality machine or a pair of silk stockings, as the case may be. "Car supplied" signifies that one will be conveyed to "good property" (selling jargon) somewhere in the Home Counties, having to share the running expenses, with six other recruits. A few firms pay a "salary" of £2 a week, usually for two weeks only (a fact not mentioned until one is "signed up"). Suppose, in a period of, say, one month, £8 has been received in "salary." Now, if in that month commission earned amounts to £9, only £1 is paid over to the salesman, as £8 has already been paid. The so-called "salary" therefore is only a drawing account on future sales. Consequently, there is a constant stream of men, rendered cynical by the desperate working conditions which they know will ensue, who pass through these companies' "sales forces," staying two weeks with each and walking out with £4 or 48*s*., etc. These evasive offers of spurious salaries and ambiguously phrased advertisements are the last resort of many large firms which are striving desperately to "push" their products.

Having secured a salesman, cynical or unsuspecting, the firm sends him to their "school" for, perhaps, one week. Here, after a whole week's advertising in half a dozen London dailies, usually only four or five trainees appear, to spend the week approaching and knocking on a hypothetical door, extolling to a hypothetical Mrs. Brown the virtues of the company's speciality, and handling the article in graceful fashion. At the conclusion of these futilities a chief from headquarters visits the recruits to inspire confidence, induce a "positive attitude" with which to demoralise the suburban housewife, encourage everybody to be "hundred percenters" (everything must be 100 per cent.) and extend prospects of an almost aggressive profusion of badges, ties, china tea-sets, trips to Ostend and cups as an added inducement to "big sales." With a round of hearty handshakes and an overdose of flatulent platitudes of the "God helps them who help themselves" type, 24*s*. (less insurance) is handed to each man, and one prepares for "the road."

It is on "the road" that one gets an opportunity of showing the requisite amount of "guts," as West End executives so delightfully label the capacity to withstand the appalling labour conditions. In the case of many canvassing and selling jobs a man must report to his "team-leader" (an expression of implied loyalty dear to the majors, colonels, captains and superannuated sixth-formers who comprise the executives of a lot of these firms) as early as 8.30 a.m. in some dreary, tram-strung, North London suburb, perhaps after an already considerable period of travelling. It should be noted that the "team-leader" is paid as much as £7 10*s*. a week as compared with the salesman's 24*s*. or £2. Apparently, this person's loyalty must be paid for lavishly by the company, thus ensuring a faithful and (towards his men) tyrannical hireling—nothing else can explain his disproportionate salary. A number of streets are allocated to each man in the team. "Demonstrations" are canvassed for, and obtained by as much trickery, downright deceit and badgering as the company will condone (which is any amount) and of which a desperate man is capable. Once inside the victim's house you leave the speciality "for a few days" and then trek back to the branch office for a second machine—and so on and so on. This goes on all day (the control over a salesman is rigorous—check and double check). In the evening one has to call back in order to deliver an unqualified panegyric to the husband, this activity being technically known as "following-up." The working day of the speciality salesman may therefore extend from half-past eight until at least ten in the evening and very often until midnight in trying to wear down a couple's "sales resistance."

The ordeal of tramping the streets of suburban London after sleeping several nights in main-line station waiting-rooms (a common refuge) has to be undergone to be appreciated. The humiliation and loss of nervous energy in badgering the unwilling and often hostile dwellers of Metroland, day after day, is enormous (there are women in this game, too, euphemistically described as "lady interviewers"). A man is either hardened into becoming a regular hire-purchase tout with all his attendant trickery or breaks up in despair. The sense of utter futility of knocking on doors to sell £20 articles becomes overwhelming. To men trained to do a decent job of work it is a desolate experience. And, as the final irony, instead of a pay-packet on Friday, seven out of ten speciality salesmen receive a chatty "sales bulletin," charged with ponderous bonhomie and talk of cups and bonuses.

And the cost of this mad chaos in distribution, apart from the degradation of thousands of poor, hunted, door-to-door touts? Several well-known household gadgets are sold at a figure in the neighbourhood of £18. Out of this the salesman will get over £3. In some cases a lady interviewer (one for every two salesmen) receives 30*s*. a week and 5*s*. per sale effected. A supervisor, in addition to a salary of at least £5 a week, gets an "overriding" commission of 5 per cent. There is a branch sales staff consisting of a manager and his assistant, both of whom share in the booty, perhaps four typists and an office boy all to maintain. Their duties are confined exclusively to the organising of door-to-door work. Thus, the real price of the finished article, allowing for a "reasonable" profit, which sells at £18, would, it will be seen, be a mere fraction of this figure but for the mad, chaotic waste in selling charges.

It might be contended that what I have related applies only to a small minority of workers. In reality there are scores of firms operating from London which employ thousands of these salesmen-canvassers. The suburbs of London, and, to a less extent, the provinces, are infested to-day by hordes of these door-to-door touts. Of this lost army a small minority are, by upbringing and background, fitted only for touting. But many of the men I have encountered tramping the streets of Finchley or Edgware have held good positions in the provinces or abroad. Unsophisticated, they constitute a perfect prey for these firms. Some keep their souls. I have met more than one of these much despised canvassers who return to their five-shilling rooms somewhere amidst the bleak wastes of Kentish Town to listen to, surprisingly, a few odd records they have preserved of Bach, Brahms, and other classical composers. Others are like dumb animals turned adrift, for an intellectual understanding of one's position, however depressed, does help to make it more tolerable. They are totally unorganised and neglected, despite their large numbers, largely because of the constantly changing personnel. This type of salesman never comes within the ambit of the commercial travellers' organisation, and is mercilessly exploited. Most of the men feel keenly the futility

of their task. But the sheer lunacy of a business world in which men are recruited for this work is a larger issue which does not usually occur to the victim. A. B. C.

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to D. R. Ellison

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Extracts should not be sent without their context. The article or passage should be sent in full with the proposed excerpt marked.

Mrs. Hannam presided at Monday's meeting of the Shirley Women's Institute. The programme took the form of a "Beetle Drive," which was arranged by Mrs. Cooper. The first prize was won by Mrs. Lantsberry and second by Mrs. Harrington.

Lady Bird, who was to have given a talk on "The Coronation and what I wore," was unable to be present, but it is hoped she will be able to give her talk at a later date.—*Warwick County News.*

Canned lobster is moving slowly, with heavy stocks on hand.—Bank's monthly report.

After a careful inspection it is understood that the two officials reported that the Glass Man was a fine work of art, but was unsuitable for showing at Glasgow on the ground of its nudity.—*Daily Herald.*

I sincerely thank the numerous friends who have so kindly expressed sympathy with me on the sudden sad loss of my little pal (Champion Li of Silbir). His nature was as beautiful as his looks. Born July 31, 1930, passed on May 10, 1938. I regret being unable to acknowledge individually at present.—Advt. in *Times.*

The old school tie is no longer in high favour among Old Etonians. At a luncheon in London yesterday of Old Etonians not half a dozen out of one hundred present wore the school colours.

"The reason is that the school tie has been made to look so cheap by music-hall jokes in which even the B.B.C. have participated," one of them told a reporter. "It has been satirised as a particular public school form of snobbishness. Old Etonians refuse to be made to look ridiculous."—*Manchester Guardian.*

Sir Thomas Cook (Con., Norfolk, N.), who runs a fire brigade of his own, said that, at a village fire shortly before Easter, only two old men answered the call and it was found that the other 12 on the brigade roll had been dead for several years.—*News Chronicle.*

THE TRIVIAL

A CHARMING woman told me the other day that she had ceased giving or going to parties. "One doesn't feel in the mood for enjoying oneself, does one?" she asked, "with all these horrors going on everywhere. I went to the opera the other night, but the flavour seemed somehow to have gone out of it, and I couldn't help feeling guilty when I thought of Spain and China and Austria. Don't you think going to operas and plays and cinemas just now is rather like fiddling while Rome is burning?" I asked her in reply to name a century in which Rome was not burning—a century in which, if a man had concentrated his thoughts on the miseries of mankind he would not have been equally in doubt whether he had the right to be happy. There has been no Golden Age in history in which the sufferings of human beings have not been beyond measure. There have been countries free from wars and invasion, as England was in the nineteenth century, but when one reads of the child-slaves in the English mines and factories, one realises that England at the time was a Hell for multitudes of her own people. It might be thought that no sensitive man, knowing of these things, could possibly enjoy going to plays and parties. But Dickens was a sensitive man, who not only knew of the cruelties of the time but helped to end some of them, and yet there were occasions on which he could forget them all at a play or a party like a child in a perfect world.

Whether he would have been a still more effective reformer if he had abjured pleasure altogether, we cannot tell. I do not, however, think that he would. There are saintly men who can live without pleasure except the pleasure of doing good. They can cut down even their eating and drinking to a bare minimum. It is possible that, if we all lived these saintly lives, the world would quickly arrive at perfection; but I doubt whether the ordinary man is capable of the effort. Even in his efforts to reform the world he constantly needs a break. He needs a break for pleasure almost as much as he needs a break for sleep or a break for food. Not quite so much, of course, since his body can survive without pleasure. But, unless a man is a saint, he cannot abjure pleasure without losing his humanity. We have seen examples of this in the intolerance and cruelties of pleasure-hating sectaries.

After all, if it is a duty to abjure pleasure to-day because of the actual and potential miseries of the world, how much more was it a duty to do so during those long centuries in which it was a common belief that the vast majority of mankind were doomed to Hell-fire! No temporary world catastrophe could inflict on the human race sufferings that could be compared with that endless anguish. Yet elderly men went on cheerfully playing croquet with neighbours who, according to their theory, might be burning in Hell a few years later. Ordinary humanity, you might think, would have urged them to throw down their mallets and devote themselves to the task of saving their neighbours from the threatened catastrophe. But they did not do so. In fact, they looked on people who kept talking to you about Hell and telling you how you might avoid it, not as benefactors, but as nuisances and semi-madmen. To the others, this seemed to prove that they were mere worldings. I do not think that this was so, however. It is a normal human instinct, to my mind, not only to do one's utmost to prevent catastrophe, but to escape at times from the very thought of it.

Hence I think that, even in these disastrous times, we need have no feeling of guilt because we can be happy for an hour or two at a party or a play. I used to wonder at times whether I had the right to enjoy good food, even superabundant food, while other people had too little to eat, and occasionally I wonder so still. But, at a dinner-party, such doubts vanish with the smoked salmon. "This hock is perfect. What were you saying about Spain?" says the woman on my right; and, later in the meal: "I can't keep my mind off poor Haile Selassie. Don't you think this is the most marvellous ice you have ever tasted?" That is merely an extreme example of the perpetual swing of the human mind between the serious and the trivial. Even the most serious-minded men, preoccupied with the horrors of the Japanese invasion of China, cannot help noticing the pleasant flavours of the things they are eating. They may be talking about horrors with grave faces, but something in their subconsciousness keeps saying, if the word is permissible: "I do like chicken cooked this way" or "This savoury is fine." I was once invited by an eminent man to lunch at his club to discuss a public tragedy that had just occurred—a tragedy that had appalled both of us. He sat down at the table and poured out his heart in rage and bitterness till the waiter arrived. Then he handed me the menu and, in a changed voice, asked briskly: "What will you begin with? Plovers' eggs?" Yet he was one of the most sensitive men living—one of the most easily moved by human suffering and one of the most active in alleviating it. Can he be blamed because on occasion he would take a brief respite from his passionate humanitarianism among the pleasures of the table?

I have read somewhere that Mazzini dressed in perpetual black as a sign of mourning for the lost liberty of Italy, vowing that he would wear no other colour till his country was free. If everybody had been of a similar way of feeling, most of the human race would have worn mourning almost from the beginning of the world. First, there was lost Eden

to mourn over. Then there were conquests and slaveries of inconceivable ruthlessness. Nations free from foreign conquest were enslaved by their own rulers. The poor became a subject race. Never since history began has there been a period in which there was not enough oppression in the world to make sensitive men mourn. Yet, by some trick of double-mindedness, millions of the most kindly people have been able to get a good deal of enjoyment from life. Living in the presence of catastrophe, they have been able at times to forget catastrophe, just as, living under the certainty of death, they are able at times to forget death.

Who, for example, is there who on a fine day in spring in the country, does not find himself at least occasionally forgetting not only his own mortality, but the sorrows of mankind? His morning paper may have been full of horrors, but how remote these become if he discovers a nest filled with the blue eggs of a hedge-sparrow! Two cock goldfinches fight in the air beside an oak, and this for the moment becomes the one important and absorbing event in the universe. How exquisitely blue are the irises in the garden! The honeysuckle in the hedge is in leaf. The sweet peas have begun to appear above the earth. Even the emergence of the potatoes from the dry soil gives him pleasure. He notices that among the tulips there are yellow flowers of a lovelier shade of yellow than he had thought possible. The hawthorn bush is of a bridal whiteness. The fruit of the gooseberry has formed on the bushes. Not a step does he take but he feels a new pleasure in the spectacle of growing things. The very birds, perpetually threatened with disaster, seem happy in their songs. Such a jubilee of song, no doubt, was heard in the Garden of Eden. Such a jubilee of song has returned with every spring through all the tortured centuries.

They are still singing as night falls, the thrush and the blackbird mingling their voices with a chorus of barking dogs. Thrush and blackbird fall silent, and leave the world to darkness and the dogs. The dogs fall silent one by one, and, as the last bark fades, the song of a nightingale can be heard from a wood across the field at the top of the garden. Who was it who invented the theory that the nightingale's song is melancholy? The "pheu, pheu, pheu" is a melancholy enough beginning, but to my mind the bubbling-notes and the bravura of the nightingale are as buoyant music as ever came from bushes. The moon has now broken through the clouds and has spread enchantment over the fields and trees. The voice of the nightingale fills the silence. Another nightingale sings in answer. Then, in the distance, a third. One seems to be living in a world of nightingales. One stands there at the top of the garden till midnight. At midnight in the moonlight a cuckoo calls from a wood. One goes to bed, still listening for nightingales through the window, but listening in vain. At half-past one, a lark, mistaking the moon for the sun, begins to sing. It is undoubtedly a wicked world and a woeful world, but, equally without doubt, one has had an enjoyable day. Y. Y.

SPEED

SPEED has become one of the ruling factors of our present age, and the extraordinary progress made in the swift transit of ourselves and our property has not unnaturally led to a greatly increased interest in the relative speeds obtained by animals of every kind. Indeed, only the advent of the aeroplane has made it possible to measure many such rates of travel with any accuracy. Prior to the beginning of this century, measurement of animal speed was almost wholly a matter of guesswork, and though great strides are now being made in this direction, much still remains to be done. Only a relatively small number of animal speeds have been actually tabulated with any accuracy, but the results, though scanty, are sufficiently illuminating.

By far the largest number of really high speeds are recorded from the air, and the lowest rates of travel are, with the exception of those obtained by burrowing animals, seen in the garden. Air, by offering the minimum resistance, offers by far the greatest scope to the "speed fiend," and it is of interest to note that, whilst birds have long since reached their utmost limits in this direction, an almost illimitable vista of triumphs opens up before man.

The highest speed in air yet recorded of any animal is 810 m.p.h. on the part of the little American deer-fly, as against a possible 450 m.p.h. obtainable by the latest flying machines. In this insect it is the male only that attains this amazing speed, the members of the opposite sex being much slower—between 500 and 600 m.p.h. This reduced speed in the case of the female insects is a provision of Nature resulting in the impassioned males possessing an advantage during courtship when in pursuit of their brides. Avian speeds fall far below this, since the very mechanism of a bird's flying apparatus sets a limit to the size obtainable—a happy contingency, since, but for this, we should, as Professor J. B. S. Haldane has pointed out, have hawks and eagles of terrifying proportions. Various species of eagle head the list of bird speedsters with a rate of 110 m.p.h. The swallow comes next and can, for a time at least, maintain a rate of well over 100 m.p.h.

Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen is the greatest authority on the subject of avian speed, and during the war compiled a table of velocity, using anti-aircraft appliances for the purpose. He calculated that birds had two speeds, a normal one for everyday purposes, including migration, and an accelerated speed which is used for purposes of pursuit and evasion, in which case double the rate of the normal speed is obtainable. He estimated that different birds are capable of the following speeds:

Names.	m.p.h.	Names.	m.p.h.
Lammergeiers	110	Kestrels	43
Swallows	106	Partridges, Rooks	40
Lapwings	80	Ravens	39
Ducks	59	Crossbills	37
Geese	55	Pigeons (tame)	36
Pelicans	51	Finches, Pheasants	33
Starlings, Storks	48	Wagtails	30
Sand Grouse	47		

Of course, the figures quoted represent flying only under normal conditions, the speeds given being exceeded for a short time in the event of favourable winds.

Beside these speeds obtained by our own and Nature's aeroplanes, the best paces obtainable on land seem very lagging efforts. Most of the animal "records" hold good only for very short distances, and no animal can approach, by forty miles at least, a really fast train, such as the Berlin–Hamburg streamlined train, which can maintain a rate of over 120 m.p.h. The fastest train in this country is the "Coronation Scot" which in June last between Whitmore and Crewe exceeded 114 m.p.h. An immense amount of energy has to be put forth by the earth-bound traveller, each step being an act of leverage which acts as a heavy drag upon him. All the fastest animals have obtained their present proficiency only as the result of extreme modifications; the elimination of superfluous toes, great lengthening of limb, and enormous development of the hip region which is responsible for the "take off" of each separate step. A few two-legged runners can compete with the quadrupedal travellers. A champion human sprinter for example can cover not much more than 100 yards at a speed of 20 m.p.h., but an emu can much exceed this, since it can travel a considerable distance at a rate of over 30 m.p.h. Jerboas, those long-legged small desert rodents, aptly described as "mice on stilts," are surprisingly fast, being able to all but outdistance a greyhound. The cheetah holds the four-legged animal record with a rate of a little over 55 m.p.h. It is about 20 m.p.h. faster than a greyhound over a very short distance. An elephant charges at 24 m.p.h., but its average pace is not above 5 m.p.h. Next to the cheetah or hunting leopard come the Gobi Desert Gazelle and the Pronghorn antelope with

speeds of 50 m.p.h. each. It is interesting to note that despite the apparent bullet-like velocity of an ice skater, his rate of travel exceeds that of a sprinter only by about 5 m.p.h., owing to the heavy resistance offered by the ice to his steel runners. The famous American bird known as the road runner can put up about 20 m.p.h.—ten miles per hour faster than a chicken going "flat out." The fastest of a slow-moving race—the snails—is the big limpet-like animal of the Channel Isles, which can cover a yard in about thirty seconds.

Next to tunnelling in dry earth, water offers the greatest resistance to rapid progression. Here, as on land, speeds are very deceptive, an animal going at a so-called "terrific speed" actually making a very modest show when its efforts are subjected to the unbiased scrutiny of a speedometer. Although Sir Malcolm Campbell's "Bluebird" has attained the impressive speed of 129.5 m.p.h., or nearly twice that of a good outboard motor boat, and four times that of a warship, or the *Queen Mary*, the tunny and sword-fish, the "fastest things on fins," are not capable of over 30 m.p.h. A flying-fish, just before taking off, exceeds this by about five miles only. Surprising as it may seem, the leisurely sloth not infrequently takes to water, habitually crossing wide rivers of the Amazon basin, when travelling from one feeding ground to another. Whilst capable of far below 1 m.p.h. in the tree tops, it can make about two or three miles per hour in the water, where it swims with a curious blend of the normal breast stroke and the racing swimmer's "American crawl." E. G. BOULENGER

Correspondence

BOMBING OF BRITISH SHIPS

SIR,—On Monday, May 9th, the newspapers published a telegram sent to them and to the Chamber of Shipping by the Masters of 13 British steamers in Valencia, asking for immediate action against deliberate bombing by Franco's aeroplanes.

Since the beginning of the war, British vessels and seamen have suffered damage and casualties from air bombardments, but the general opinion has been that they are no more than natural results of risks knowingly undertaken through trading to Government Spain. During recent months bombing has been intensified particularly in Valencia and Barcelona, but the information collected by various British Masters now proves beyond doubt that British vessels are being deliberately singled out for attack. The trade with Government Spain is carried almost exclusively in British bottoms and this is of vital importance to the Republicans.

If Franco can terrorise the crews by deliberate bombardment, causing them to refuse signing on for Spain, the trade will cease. A few months after the start of the war, Scandinavian ships were dealt with effectively by piracy on the high seas, and only the Nyon Agreement saved the trade for British shipowners.

Ships under the British flag can still reach the ports safely, but are being subject at present to ever-increasing danger from the air. His Majesty's Government have made it clear in answer to Opposition questions that they will not tolerate deliberate attacks on neutral ships engaged in lawful trade, even within the three-mile limit. After the raid of May 7th on British steamers in Valencia, Mr. Butler on Wednesday, May 11th, said in the House that "instructions had been given to address a strong protest to the Burgos authorities against what appears to His Majesty's Government an entirely unwarrantable proceeding and to request an immediate investigation."

The s.s. *Greatend*, laden with coal, which steamer is managed by the firm of which I am a director, arrived in Valencia on May 6th to discharge. The next day she received a direct hit in the fo'c'sle wounding three members of the crew, one of whom died of his injuries on Monday; on May 11th, the day the so-called protest to Burgos was made, she received a direct hit aft, wrecking her steering gear and poop; on Saturday, May 14th, she received direct hits amidships by explosive and incendiary bombs. Through these three attacks in one week, the steamer is expected to be a total loss. The Master telegraphed the attacks were deliberate.

Already owners are having trouble with crews in Spanish waters, as they cannot expect seamen to endanger their lives even if His Majesty's Government states that it will not countenance deliberate attacks by Franco against them. The facts prove the opposite is true. Protests by masters and owners to the usual authorities result always in the same reply, namely, that a protest has been made to Burgos and everything possible is being done.

Owing to the collapse of the world freight market, the Spanish trade is now more important than ever to owners and seamen alike, but there is little doubt that if H.M. Government do not devise measures for taking a stronger line this vital trade will be beset with greater difficulties and may cease altogether.

Mansion House Chambers, Close, Newcastle-on-Tyne. E. C. HASLAM

LABOUR AND THE POPULAR FRONT

SIR,—May I be allowed to deal with some of the confusions arising in you current number?

As for Mr. Robertson Scott, I do not feel that the columns of your journal are quite the correct place in which to argue the peculiar issues of the Banbury Division. Since however he has seen fit to introduce the subject (which I had not), let me say merely that I have heard less reputable versions of the negotiations preceding Early's candidature, that Early has not supported the Labour Group on the Oxfordshire County Council on important issues, and that therefore it is not unfair to suggest that his support of a Labour Government would be equally spasmodic; that I cannot accept the suggestion that monetary contributions, however large, are the criterion of keen Labour workers, nor that being able to trace his ancestors back to James II is a relevant qualification for a Labour or Progressive candidate.

Mr. Lucas seems to desire that the Liberals should be a brake on the Popular Front Government. That is just my point. What the average elector wants now is a Government that will do something. A Popular Front Government could of necessity do little that was effective to deal with injustice and misery at home . . . and some of the electorate are concerned with Home Affairs. "Labour can only convince such people in their millions that it can govern, by actually governing. If it succeeds in partnership, it will be trusted alone." But what if it fails . . . as it has failed in the past when we have had to depend on doubtful Liberal support? If Mr. Lucas has had any experience in canvassing on the doorstep he will realise that the previous experiments at Lib-Lab. government are still one of our major difficulties.

In conclusion may I repeat my plea that we should not allow ourselves to be driven by hysteria into a fundamental error of judgment? A Popular Front Government abroad might save Europe and might save England. Might. It will not bring Socialism at home, and it will mean the death of some part of the Labour organisation. That much is certain. A Socialist Government stands an equal chance of saving Europe and England, will make an effort to give us Socialism at home, and will leave the Local Labour Parties unimpaired. On the dogmatic assumption that this Socialist Government cannot be achieved, the Popular Front supporters ask us to work for their alternative with all the risks attendant on it. I only ask that they should examine this assumption in its national aspects. As a statistician by profession I can find no proof that is convincing, and in the absence of it still suggest that the balance of advantage seems to lie with the present party basis. I am not ignorant of the gravity of the international situation, and unlike some of your correspondents am willing to admit that I may be mistaken. I only ask that we should not rush into an unfortunate and fatal alliance.

22 Museum Road, Oxford. R. S. G. RUTHERFORD

SIR,—The defenders of the Popular Front do not realise that an increased Socialist vote in a by-election is a much greater blow to reaction than a parliamentary victory for a Liberal. What do the reactionaries care if they lose a seat or two provided that the winners are pledged not to offend the susceptibilities of the Duchess of Atholl and Mr. Winston Churchill? They differ with such people only as to the best way of maintaining the capitalist system. Even in a General Election, reaction has little to fear from a Labour victory provided it depends upon Liberal support. Surely the fiasco of the last two Labour Governments demonstrates this fact. Did they not do almost irreparable harm to Socialism? Surely the lesson of those days was that reformist coalitions offer no hope to workers, coolies or convicts! They breed disillusionment and produce more Fascists than all the Fascist propaganda.

A second assumption of these quondam Communists is that Liberals and "progressive" Tories are genuine in their opposition

to reaction and Fascism and their willingness to defend the U.S.S.R. (Winston Churchill!) There is only one thing they are genuine in, and that is the defence of the British Empire—British Democracy as manifested in Kenya, Cyprus, Jamaica, etc. Have Socialists still to point out that Fascism is not the product of Hitlers but of economics; that "Capitalist Democracy" is the parent of Fascism, not its alternative; that your liberties and your reforms disappear at home the day you go into imperialist trenches to fight Fascism abroad; that the only answer to reaction is direct action for Socialism?

Sometimes groups of "progressives" will find that their interests coincide with ours. They will then fight for us, and welcome. But if we are to give up our Socialist propaganda at by-elections, on May Day and in our journals, in order to woo these gentlemen, we are entrusting the pass to a gang who have sold it time and time again. The capture of the parliamentary machine at such a price is not worth it.

Fascism has one fear—the spread of the ideas of Socialism and political and economic freedom. It just laughs up its sleeve to see us crawling back into the sheepfold of reformism and parliament, shepherded by the men who may protect us from the wolf, but only in order to make mutton of us.

6, Broadway Market, Southend-on-Sea, Essex. V. BENN, Chairman of Southend I.L.P.

THE SHOPS MUDDLE

SIR,—May I, a small shopkeeper and the son of a small shopkeeper, take part in the correspondence concerning the Shops Act Muddle?

The Shops Act is a muddle. But, what part of our legislative system is not? The Shops Acts are no worse than many of the others which have attempted to improve conditions.

My father worked scandalous hours when he was young. At the beginning of the century it was no unusual thing to work from seven in the morning till midnight every day of the week during December and on every Saturday throughout the year. The Shops Act of 1912 did something to improve these conditions and ensured a weekly half-day, but it left people under eighteen to work a seventy-two hour week. It was left for the Shops Act of 1934 to reduce the working hours for young people to a reasonable limit. So much for the Act of 1912.

In almost every other walk of life, Trade Unions have secured reasonable working conditions for employees, but there has been almost no Trade Union activity in retail trades. Almost all improvements in working conditions have been due to Government intervention. I think even "The Writer of The Article" will admit that some intervention was needed.

"Writer" seems to be mostly concerned about the effect of the Acts on small shopkeepers. There are hundreds of small shopkeepers who regard the matter as I do myself. Until recently there was another shop of the same type directly opposite my own. Now, had that shopkeeper decided to keep open till eight each night, the legal limit, I should have been forced to keep open an hour later instead of closing at seven as was our custom. Had I not remained open I should have offended numbers of my customers who would have decided that I was getting a bit above myself since I could afford to close an hour before the other man. We have a short way with "uppishness" here in the North. No matter whether we closed at seven or eight, the local population had exactly the same spending capacity, so I think we may safely assume that even by closing at the earlier hour we lost no business so long as all the other shops of the same type were closing at the same time.

As a result of the extra freedom brought by the Shops Acts, I have had chances which my father never had. It has been possible to attend evening classes or to take a cycle ride after business in the summer. "Writer" suggests that I could still have done so even if my opponent had closed later. But, would he refuse to undertake a series of commissioned articles for an editor because he wanted a trip into the country if he knew that another equally capable writer was waiting for the chance? Had my rival opened later other shops of the same type would certainly have followed suit, and once others had decided to open I must have followed suit, or have watched my customers going elsewhere.

The trouble with the Shops Act is not that there are so many dubious exemptions, but rather that there should be any exemptions. Why should a shop be allowed to open to sell ham or cigarettes? If "Writer" is spending Sunday in a district where there are no shops he buys his cigarettes the day before. If John Citizen knows that all the shops in the town will be closed on Sunday, he too buys his cigarettes on Saturday night. Why should half the cigarette shops in the town be forced to open because they know that one man, who has no interest in a Sunday in the country or even in a church service, will open in case John Citizen forgot to buy his packet of cigarettes on Saturday? Sunday trade exists not because there is need for it, but because the public has been pampered so long by shopkeepers that it will no longer trouble to think a day ahead.

"Writer" need not concern himself with the small shopkeeper who falls foul of the law. The motorist who exceeds the limit in a built-up area takes a sporting chance of being pinched, so does the shopkeeper who sells buns without the ham. He weighs his profit against the risk and profit wins. "Writer" would do better to save his sympathy for the employees of some of the large concerns. It is not unknown for a branch manager to receive a noble thirty shillings weekly.

Most of the opposition to earlier closing for shops comes from outside and often the working classes are the worst offenders in this way. They of course are the people who owe their short working week to the efforts of powerful Unions. Would there not be some grumbling if the shopkeeper asked for profit and a half for Sundays and other overtime? But there would soon be no need for Sunday opening or any other late hours.

Middlesbrough. GEORGE NORMAN

SIR,—Your correspondent's suggestion that Sunday opening should be permitted, but only to shopkeepers who do not employ assistants, fails to meet the situation for two reasons. First, it is by no means the case that the employment of assistants implies that a shopkeeper can afford to lose trade by closing when his smaller competitors remain open. Further, apart from closing regulations, there is nothing in shops legislation to limit the hours of adult assistants; frankly, I do not know what your correspondent means by quoting the 1912 Act in this connection. Nor, incidentally, do I understand how he can challenge my statement about the Eldorado ice-cream case, which was based on the *Times Law Reports*.

Secondly, I maintain that the possibility of leisure given by the Sunday Closing Act is desired by the majority of the smallest shopkeepers, not to mention the members of their families who act as unpaid assistants. Of course, one can find a few dissenters, which the Beaverbrook press is to-day trying to build into a stage army. But I am confident that both the public and the small shopkeepers will soon settle down to the new conditions, exactly as they did over the weekly half-holiday, which when introduced was by no means taken for granted as it is now.

That the small grocers, organised in their representative Associations, have exercised their right under the Sunday Closing Act to record their votes against the granting of partial exemption orders, I do not deny. But why does your correspondent think it wicked of them? It merely shows that they want to close on Sunday.

DONALD BARBER

95 Weston Drive, Stanmore, Middlesex.

COLONIES

SIR,—Sir Norman Angell's review of Dr. M. J. Bonn's book, *The Crumbling of Empire; the Disintegration of World Economy*, condemns the misleading use of such loose phrases and thinking as suggest that colonies "belong" to their mother countries. Undoubtedly much harm is done by the dissemination of such falsehoods.

But Sir Norman omits to tell us (and his review suggests that Dr. Bonn is no more enlightening on the subject) to whom they really do belong. And his implication that colonies are not "worth while" is hardly convincing. It is surely a trifle naive to believe that the millions of lives and untold wealth which have been squandered in the conquest of territory have been an entirely aimless and fruitless prodigality, that no one has benefited from these imperialist wars, or will not do so in the future.

Perhaps Sir Norman will answer this simple question: To whom do the natural resources of colonies belong—to the native coolies, or to capitalists in the mother country? Who benefits from the exploitation of these resources; and is such exploitation

made easier and more secure when the colonial territory is under the legal and military control of the imperialist country, as with India or Trinidad, or when it is in a "foreign" country such as Mexico?

Is it not evident that for certain people the "possession" of colonial territory is very profitable—and well worth fighting for, so long as someone else does the fighting? Would Sir Norman deny that British capitalists who own property in India, or who have money invested in Indian Government loans, benefit from their "right" to exploit the labour of the indigenous inhabitants? Or that German capitalists would benefit in the same way if their troops conquered some of our territory?

Why does Sir Norman evade the crucial point—that the capitalist class in any country does stand to benefit from colonies, but that the 90 per cent. who comprise the working class do not stand to benefit except in a minor and indirect way? The protection for this minority of their foreign investments is the privilege of the mass of the people under the hypocritical guise of "patriotism."

F. J. D. DICKINS

63 Eton Avenue, N.W.3.

LOVE THAT CHEWS

SIR,—The divine sentiment of love manifests itself in some remarkable ways; and among them not the least remarkable is that of the Mother Rabbit who, when one of her offspring is in danger, promptly devours it.

Sir Thomas Beecham's celebrated love of Mozart has often led him into similar expressions of delirious altruism, and in this connection his recent exploit with the *Magic Flute* at Covent Garden deserves to be recorded. It was apparently unnoticed, not only by your own musical critic, but (so far as I can discover) by all the musical critics of the London press. In the second act of the opera Sir Thomas entirely altered the order of the music as it was composed by Mozart. The facts can be stated succinctly. The musical pieces in question (numbered by the composer from 9 to 21) were performed in the following order: 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 20, 17, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 21. Further, the last of these musical numbers (No. 21, the Finale) is a long piece of continuous music falling into four major scenes; the order of the middle two of these was transposed at Covent Garden.

Until the other day the plays of Shakespeare used regularly to receive precisely this kind of treatment from their producers and for precisely the same reasons. For instance, there was the production of *Antony and Cleopatra* in which all the scenes in Rome were strung together and acted first, and all the scenes in Egypt strung together and acted afterwards. Two grounds were alleged for this alteration. First, it enabled the management to give Shakespeare the assistance of the most magnificent scenery with a minimum of intervals for changing it. And secondly it was clear that the new arrangement gave the play a continuity and design which were sadly lacking in its ordinary form and which Shakespeare himself would undoubtedly have adopted if he had not been prevented by the absurd conventions and childish usages of the Elizabethan stage. Both reasons, it will be observed, were based upon the management's love of Shakespeare; it was only by making these slight changes that his works could be preserved in the modern theatre.

I feel perfectly certain that these will be the reasons brought forward to justify Sir Thomas Beecham's alterations in the *Magic Flute*. The intervals necessitated by shifting Schinkel's magnificent scenery would have been intolerable if the scenes had been given in the right order. Moreover, this absurd plethora of changes was imposed upon Mozart by his childish librettist and he would have jumped at the chance of adopting Sir Thomas's greatly improved design. Mother Rabbit, in fact, knows best.

The only difficulty is that both of these reasons are figmentary. We have had actual experience of performances of the *Magic Flute* in which the scenes have been given in the right order, not, it is true, with Schinkel's magnificent scenery, but with perfectly adequate decorations and actually with shorter waits than at Covent Garden. Again, whatever may have been the ultimate determinants of the order of the scenes, there is ample ground for supposing that Mozart regarded them as having both dramatic and musical continuity. This is more particularly clear from the order of the keys in which the successive numbers are written—a matter to which Mozart always paid the greatest attention. The vital importance of this kind of continuity is self-evident in the case of the Finale, which was composed as an uninterrupted musical whole. But it is only a degree less obvious in the case of the separated musical numbers. To interfere with this continuity is to destroy an essential element in Mozart's opera.

The Mother Rabbit, having finished chewing her meal, licks her lips and looks around with a self-satisfied air, waiting for the applause to die down. "What a comfort," she murmurs, "to feel that the poor darling is safe at last!"

JAMES STRACHEY

41 Gordon Square, W.C.1.

ST. PANCRAS

SIR,—I am empowered to collect material for the Labour, Radical and Trade Union section of the Council's Exhibition "St. Pancras Through the Ages," to be held next September. The recollections of some of your older readers, and of others who have any knowledge of the history of the Borough, would probably be extremely helpful.

I would like to ascertain, among other things, which Radical and progressive organisations had offices in the Borough; Charlotte Street for instance was a great centre of such bodies. Old pictures of Labour, Radical or progessive leaders known to have lived in or been otherwise associated with St. Pancras, original local Trade Union cards, any local link with early Co-operatives and with Chartism, would all be welcomed.

I should be grateful if anyone who has any information or suggestions to offer would communicate with me as soon as possible. Letters to: Councillor Jackson, St. Pancras Town Hall, N.W.1. Pictures and actual exhibits should be reserved till later.

STELLA JACKSON

St. Pancras Town Hall, N.W.1.

POLICE COURTS

SIR,—May I correct an error which occurred in my article on Police Courts in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION of May 7th? Discussing the attitude of some Benches towards indecency cases, I said that if I were asked for advice in a case coming before a "Bad Bench" I thought that I would advise a defendant to plead guilty, unless he could afford to appeal. After this I wrote, or meant to write, "With a plea of guilty he will be spared the publicity of the detailed evidence which would otherwise be given, and he may quite possibly get off with a lighter penalty on conviction." Unfortunately, this sentence appeared: "With a plea of *not* guilty . . . etc." With a plea of not guilty, that is, in a contested case, detailed evidence would, of course, have to be given by the prosecution's witnesses. Where there seems a thin chance of acquittal (and I have pointed out how thin this chance can sometimes be) a defendant who took the course of pleading guilty might well be given credit for that plea when the time came to inflict a penalty.

REPORTER

THE NEW EDUCATION

SIR,—"Critic" deplores the fact that a generation has grown up with no knowledge of Bible literature, and asks whether a still younger generation is perhaps travelling the same way. We as parents are faced with a dilemma. We must choose between an orthodox school where Bible study and the O.T.C. are both part of the curriculum, and the new type of school where children learn how to think for themselves, but where unfortunately Bible literature is generally ignored. Shakespeare is read and learnt and enjoyed, but the Old and New Testaments seem to be set aside completely—an incalculable loss, as Critic suggests.

I. and J. BARCLAY

Miscellany

THE GLASGOW EXHIBITION

HAVING visited recent exhibitions at Brussels and Barcelona as well as three in Paris, I thought I should like to look at the Empire Exhibition at Glasgow. But this is made as difficult as possible for the Londoner. The Exhibition is closed on Sunday, and the only excursion ticket that I could discover entails spending both Friday and Saturday nights in the train. Unwilling to do this, I was forced to take an ordinary monthly ticket costing seventy-four shillings. I then travelled in the

Coronation Scot, which is a very rapid and punctual train. The coaches and locomotive are painted blue, the interior is resplendent with polished sycamore, and the third-class seats are extraordinarily uncomfortable. (If the directors were obliged occasionally to travel third-class, I think there would soon be a change in the depth and pitch of the seats.) Why the L.M.S. should be so far behind the Southern Railway in this respect, I cannot imagine. The food included the usual halibut reduced to soggy blotting-paper. Why it should be so much more difficult to provide eatable food in an English train than in an Imperial Airways aeroplane, again I cannot imagine. Then I arrived at a hotel. No doubt its architecture would interest students of Gilbert Scott and his pupils, but the curtains were so small (valuable antiques, I suppose) that they would not meet, and I had to pay 15*s.* 6*d.* for bed and breakfast. (The hotel belonged to the railway-line.) I think the Exhibition is worth visiting, but I cannot think that it is worth the expense and the discomfort to which the L.M.S. contrives to expose you. During the Paris Exhibition all railway-fares in France were reduced by forty per cent., to induce foreigners and provincials to come to Paris. Glasgow is close to some of the finest scenery in Great Britain—I spent the Sunday in Galloway among mountains and loughs of unsurpassable beauty—and here was a chance to put this country on the tourist map. I do not presume to say that the railway policy is bad for the shareholders, though I suspect that it is. But certainly it is very hard on the organisers of the Exhibition and on Scottish country innkeepers.

The outstanding merit of the Exhibition is its general appearance and layout. Mr. T. S. Tait, Mr. Spence and their collaborators have obviously visited the Paris Exhibition, but they have used colour more freely and skilfully than it was used in Paris (the blue and red of the Scottish Pavilions are specially admirable). There are also far more flowers, and, thank goodness, not nearly so much sculpture. The hilly park which provides the site is full of trees which look theatrically beautiful when illuminated at night. The decorative paintings on the Palaces of Engineering and Industry are feeble, the Australian Pavilion is painfully clumsy, but most of the buildings are well designed and well grouped. There is a very pleasant restaurant, the Atlantic, with good food and surprisingly elegant decorations in fresco. (But owing to the odd licensing regulations of Glasgow, I could not get a drink at luncheon!) The two Scottish Pavilions and the United Kingdom Government Pavilion are very well arranged, the Imperial Chemical Industries Pavilion has a notably well thought out design; Shell-Mex, as usual, advertises itself with taste much above the average, and Southern Rhodesia has an amusing large model of the Victoria Falls. The Scottish Committee of the Council for Art and Industry show three respectably furnished flats. And the amusement park amuses.

The Palace of Art is thoroughly disappointing. Only one room is devoted to the pre-Victorians, like Allan Ramsay and Geddes; there are only two oil-paintings by Wilkie and two by Nasmyth; but room after room is devoted to the ordinary modern Royal Academy painters, painters that have not even the merit of being Scottish, with among them, here and there, an odd example of the better non-Academic painters. A Londoner, therefore, can hardly be advised to visit Glasgow for the sake of the pictures. The most interesting old picture I found was a landscape by J. C. Wintour (1825–1882), an excellent work by a painter I had never heard of. The best of the later Scottish school seemed to be E. A. Walton and J. J. Peploe—the latter an artist of considerable power and integrity. M'Taggart disappoints: his gift was remarkable, but his large pictures usually look too large for their content, and in his smaller pictures in water-colour he makes little use of the material.

The weakest feature of the Exhibition is the display in the two Palaces of Industry. This is like the British Industries Fair at Olympia, only worse. I have never seen furniture, textiles and ornaments more vulgar and squalid. There are, of course, exceptions: thus the Scottish Art and Industry Committee has a respectable exhibit, and the Old Glamis Weavers show some agreeable materials. But even the tweeds, in which Scotland could make a shining show, are unenterprisingly chosen and ineffectively displayed. Another Empire Exhibition is due in a few years, and I think the whole principle on which light industry is represented requires to be altered. An exhibition of this sort ought to be more than a shop-window, it ought to set a standard. Instead of renting space to any firm prepared to pay, the organisers ought to select the best goods procurable in every class and at every price. In fact, the display ought to be made by a committee like that which arranged the British Pavilion at the Paris Exhibition. The additional cost would repay itself in the long run, for such a display would be incomparably more effective. I should be ashamed to take a Frenchman, a Swede or any foreigner round the tawdry, tasteless exhibits in the Glasgow "Palaces of Industry." Scotland could make, and I fancy does make, incomparably better stuff than this. The Scottish Pavilions, and still more the United Kingdom Government Pavilion, with good decorations by Kraber and Eric Frazer, show us how effective a properly arranged exhibit can be.

Glasgow is a conspicuous improvement on Wembley: the architects have learnt what an exhibition should be, and so have the Scottish and British responsible authorities. But the example of the Paris Exhibition has been entirely lost on the Dominions, and on most of the manufacturers. It is not our business to bring pressure on Australia, Canada and South Africa: if they will not show their stuff better, it is their funeral. But it is important that every influence should be brought to bear on the organiser of the next Empire Exhibition so that the manufacturers of the United Kingdom shall be represented by their best, not their most vulgar, products. In the Engineering Pavilion at Glasgow there is much that is impressive and even beautiful: great screws and engines and pumps and ship-models. In the lighter industries it was difficult to find anything to satisfy the eye. Good furniture is being manufactured in this country, and good textiles, and good glass. (Our Pavilion at Paris, though far from perfect, made this obvious.) There are great undertakings that show an enlightened attitude to industrial design (the Underground Railway and Shell-Mex conspicuous among them). Unfortunately, these are not usually the firms most responsible for the designs used in the country. May we not appeal to men like Mr. Samuel Courtauld, who is equally celebrated as a manufacturer, a man of taste, and a philanthropist, to give a lead? For the stuff shown at Glasgow may be good enough to sell to bungalows and tenements in Great Britain, but it is not good enough to show to buyers from the Continent and America.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

THE UNACADEMIC ACADEMY

OF all the letters, speeches, articles and interviews provoked by the Academy's latest iniquity the best I have read is Wyndham Lewis's first letter to the *Times* of May 2nd. In it he raises the essential, and therefore generally neglected, point, that the Royal Academy is utterly unacademic. The modest but useful function of an academy is to cherish tradition, to study diligently, and so far as possible intelligently, the practice and precepts of the masters, and to be thus in a position, when some young painter appears unduly persuaded of his proper sufficiency, to confront him with a criterion and a control. To the public also academies have a duty. It is their business to oppose popular philistinism and fashionable snobbery with a cultivated taste based on scholarship; to give the lie to stupid materialism; and, by keeping bright the example of the masters, to shame polite society out of its hankering after the alluring and superficial. Thus have academies attempted to preserve tradition. Needless to say,

in such stuffy lodgings, tradition has grown anaemic and died. An academy is an almshouse destined to become a cemetery. Absurd it is bound to be, but it need not be disreputable: it will not become so till it ceases to be academic.

Unluckily, for the last hundred years, our royal academicians have, as a rule, known less about the spirit and practice of the masters than those whom it was their duty to instruct. The National Gallery means more to a young rebel with a feeling for art than it can possibly mean to a teacher who rarely goes there—who rarely goes there for the excellent reason that he could make nothing of it if he did. How should he? Frankly—and I put the question without rhetorical intention or back thoughts—frankly, what connection could a teacher, a student or anyone else find between a portrait by Rubens or Rembrandt or Velasquez and a portrait by the president of the Royal Academy? The primary object of an artist, ancient or modern, is to create a work of art; the object of the ordinary academician is to make a saleable article. He is an honest and obliging tradesman who has no use for studies that will not help him to make the sort of portrait of a mayor or a royalty that mayors and royalties have been taught by a hundred years of commercialism to expect. Very wisely, therefore, the ordinary academician leaves the National Gallery alone and goes for tips to the illustrated "weeklies."

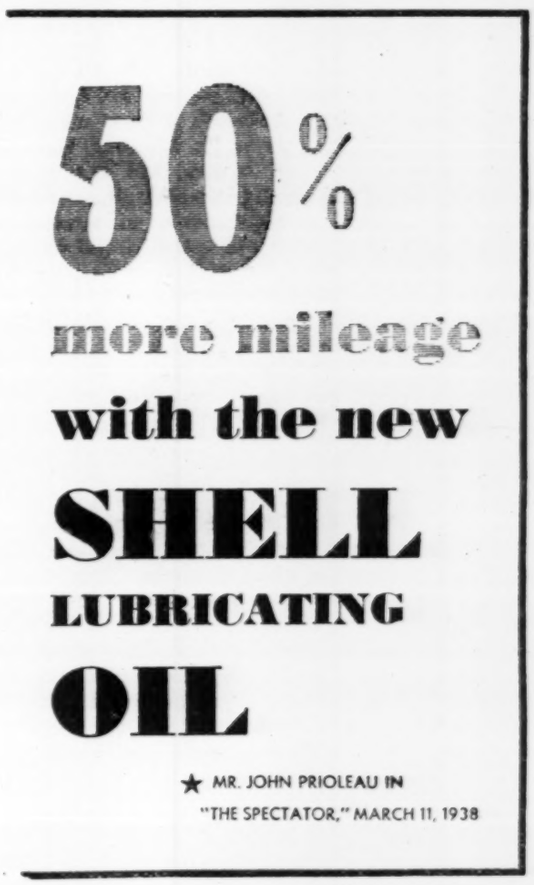
What has been wrong with the Royal Academy for the last hundred years is not that it has been conservative and pedantic but that it has been ignorant and vulgar—that it has been unacademic in fact. Mainly recruited, not from learned old dry-as-dusts cherishing too exclusively the traditions of Masaccio and Raphael, of Rubens and Poussin, but from smart salesmen and indefatigable intriguers, it has naturally held up as examples, not the work of old masters, but that of living or lately deceased members. Had a genuine academy existed in the nineteenth century doubtless its authority would have proved hampering and vexatious to young painters of original talent; on the other hand, by making it clear that art and photography are quite different things, it would have saved them from the disastrous mistake of regarding the camera as a rival or a paragon. Also it would have opposed to the atrocious barbarism of the age a tradition of scholarship and a cultivated taste. What effect this might have had on British painting is a question for the prize essayist. Practically it does not arise, since nothing of the sort existed or exists. The Royal Academy of 1938 is the moribund rump of the old-established firm.

The reactions of the public, of the newspapers and politicians, to this latest outrage are instructive, because they show that people still suppose that the Academy is academic, a venerable institution to be defended against the attacks of subversive agitators: unless, indeed, they suppose that the proper functions of an academy are what the academicians themselves apparently believe them to be. This is disappointing. That the *Times* should have put up its funny man to write a vulgar "leader" is right and proper and was to be expected. But that the critic of the *Times*, who for years has been winning golden opinions from precisely those people whose good opinion is worth winning, should, before asking himself whether the academy still performed its ideal functions or even its elementary duties, have rushed to the defence of a public inconvenience, is regrettable. Certainly if the Federation of British Industries were in danger the *Times* would be expected to come to its rescue; but, if it appeared that the members now devoted themselves exclusively to the breeding of white mice, I daresay the judicious city editor would consider much sympathy misplaced. No one should have the impertinence to suggest that the critics of the *Times* and other reputable papers submit to dictation. But it is difficult to understand how men accustomed to studying works of art, men of sensibility and education, who are not in the habit of wasting compliments on exhibitions of utterly undistinguished work, find it possible to do more than bestow, here and there, a phrase or two of perfunctory commendation on the summer exhibition at Burlington House.

The case of Mr. Winston Churchill is different. His speech gave pain to his admirers—so much pain that a story is now being put about that he meant something quite different from what he said. What he did say was that he was on the side of the Academy, which he was pleased to call "authority" or "discipline," and his admirers were pained because, said they, "Winston Churchill knows better." But does he? The two or three pictures by that versatile statesman which I have seen lead to no such conclusion. And is not his writing the counterpart of the sort of painting that makes a splash at Burlington House? That second-hand Macaulayese, that spurious erudition, those easy generalisations that do duty for thought, and those purple passages which the author takes for eloquence, might come to the mind of anyone who happened to be looking at the work of (say) Mr. Munnings, R.A.

I say Munnings—"one of the *really* good academicians," they tell us—because at the Leicester Galleries there is an exhibition of his pictures; and in the same building hangs the rejected portrait by Wyndham Lewis. I do not greatly admire that picture. But it is intelligent and workmanlike; the drawing is sure and sharp; the artist has come, more by thought than feeling, to understand the forms he wished to render, and has rendered them by means of a studied and competent technique. This is a picture which a genuinely academic body would admire to excess. There are two rooms of paintings by Mr. Munnings. Here and there you will find a pig or a hound touched off with a modicum of sensibility—sensibility to the quality of paint rather than the significance of form. The rest seems to me just a mass of cotton-wool decked with scarlet. But it all looks expensive: the very subjects are expensive. If the cheques are big, they are endorsed with a flourish. This is precisely the sort of painting that an academy which knew its job would discountenance.

If Mr. Churchill really meant exactly the opposite of what he said, will he not use his influence to help clean up the mess? The Royal Academy is to some extent supported by the



tax-payer, that is to say it gets rent-free from the State one of the most valuable sites in London. I hope and think that the summer exhibitions are not very profitable, but I dare say the winter exhibitions bring in a pretty penny. At any rate, the Academy is able to pay handsome pensions to its widows. I shall not be so simple as to attribute to His Majesty's ministers any extraordinary solicitude for the fate of British art; but if they wish to behave with common fairness it seems to me that one of only two courses is open to them. Either they can respect the intention of the founders and make the exhibition truly representative, or they can resume possession of their property to the benefit of the tax-payer. Should they prefer the first alternative, they can insist on at least half the rooms being handed over to independent societies (e.g., The New English Art Club, The London Group), thus making the summer exhibition a truly national affair and giving the public an opportunity of judging between royal academic art and art. Should they deem this impracticable, they can charge the academy a fair rent for the use of national property.

CLIVE BELL

THE MOVIES

"Break the News," at the Leicester Square.
"Convict 99," at the Gaumont (from Sunday).
"Who Goes Next?" at the Tivoli (from Tuesday).

EITHER M. Réné Clair is easily intimidated, or he is acquiring a sad taste for British musical comedy humour. Little enough of his characteristic wit was to be found in *The Ghost Goes West*, but *Break the News* contains none at all. That the imaginative director of *Le Chapeau de Paille*, *Sous les Toits* and *Le Million* should have descended to this is scarcely credible. Shall I be believed when I say that, in order to raise a laugh in a court scene, he makes the judge lift his wig and scratch his head—and that not once but twice? Nor is he the only one who lets us down in this film: the programme informs us that music and lyrics are by Cole Porter, to which one's only reply must be a shocked "Oh, Mr. Porter! . . ." The two leading parts—a couple of chorus boys—are played by Jack Buchanan and Maurice Chevalier. Buchanan is one of those comedians who, in the words of the dramatic critic, "work hard to keep things moving"; his agility and endurance have some affinity with humour, and Chevalier, too, masticatory in speech and puzzled in manner, is a fairly merry man in this film, though only a shadow of his sparkling self. Both do what they can with wretched material, and are at their best in the opening scene when, clad in grey bowlers and fortissimo tweeds, they parody an excruciatingly bad musical comedy turn; this is followed by some familiar, but quite good, jokes at the expense of the star, a lady with a positive genius for publicity (June Knight). After that things go from bad to worse, though the theme—the efforts of the chorus boys to obtain publicity by means of an imaginary murder—should have suited M. Clair's charming talent down to the ground.

There are more honest laughs in the latest Will Hay, though that exceedingly droll actor has not yet found the director who can make the most of his anxious pince-nezed benevolence, his perpetual air of shady gentility, his cry of "Boys! Boys!" that eternal plea for order in a hostile world. In *Convict* 99 he is the victim of a series of mistaken identities. Ignominiously kicked from the Gothic portals of St. Michael's School, Dr. Benjamin Twist is accidentally appointed to the governorship of an even tougher establishment, Blackdown Prison. He arrives drunk in the middle of a mutiny, and is mistaken for a convict. This little trouble cleared up, he makes a strong speech to his ex-fellow-convicts, promising them every comfort and convenience: "You must think of these walls not as a device to keep you in, but as a barrier to keep the riff-raff out." The fun is neither fast nor furious, but compared with *Break the News* it has the robust superiority of music-hall over musical comedy. I wonder though whether we are really as slow-witted a race as our movie moguls have decided.

Who Goes Next? is a prisoner of war escape story, notable for an excellent performance by Barry Barnes as Major Hamilton. The Ian Hay-ish humours of Englishmen imprisoned in Germany have an authentic look; but were our officers really allowed to throw their weight about like that in the Fatherland, complaining of a bad smell when the Commandant is in the room, kicking up a great fuss about missing letters and parcels, and burlesquing *Deutschland über alles?* No doubt the prison atmosphere is correctly reproduced, for the producers have had the assistance in these scenes of Mr. Durnford who has recounted his famous escape from prison in *The Tunnellers of Holzminden*. In any event, all this part of the film is good, but the English scenes, showing a love affair between Hamilton's wife and an officer on leave, are perfunctory and unreal. Of course, Capt. Beck is captured and sent to the same prison as the man whose wife he loves; and melodrama demands that he sacrifice himself so that Hamilton may escape. The escape itself, and all the German scenes, are exciting and amusing enough to repay a visit, but I strongly recommend departure before the final scene, which shows the annual reunion dinner of the fugitives, with an empty place always laid for Capt. Beck, a quotation from Laurence Binyon by the Major, and a posy laid on the unused doily by his wife.

PETER GALWAY

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"People of Our Class," at the New Theatre

Mr. St. John Ervine's new play has the advantage of being "about something." At the age of twenty-nine the daughter of a county family decides to marry the son of the local butcher: she wants a husband and children, she has had no other offers, and she has spotted the young man as likely to make money. Her father strongly objects, the butcher objects at least equally strongly, but she gets her way. The strength of the play is in situation and effective ripostes. Its weakness is a deliberate softening of the issue. The young man is far too "presentable": there are, no doubt, some butchers' sons who have the ease of manner and the intonations of the County, but how much more acute the situation would be, if the man were in this respect less exceptional. For the real class-barriers are made of details tiny, absurd and yet prodigiously powerful. Mr. Ervine can however be congratulated on not sentimentalising his characters. The two lovers are more interested in material success than in anything. Their arguments are good, but their natures are in the worst sense common: presumably the marriage will be a great success. Mr. Ervine justly emphasises the difference between class and caste: in this country some families are going up, and others going down. But he seems to accept too readily the view that material success is a test of merit; and there is never a hint that in our civilisation business ability is rewarded incomparably beyond its social value. The survival of the fittest is all very well, but is the gift for making large profits a particularly valuable form of fitness? It is the only form considered in this play. Mr. Ervine gives his characters a number of "bold" lines calculated to *épater* the older ladies in the audience, but his dashing young people have already a rather old-fashioned look. (Apparently this is a rewritten version of an old play.) At least we are never bored by the performance, and the acting is excellent. The cast includes Mr. Nicholas Hannen, Miss Mary Merrall, Miss Athene Seyler (in a very vapid part), Miss Ursula Jeans, Miss Beryl Measor, Mr. James Harcourt, Mr. Laurier Lester and Mr. Bernard Lee. The production is a little uncertain. (In a play about class-differences, a representative of the Upper Classes ought not to hold a tea-cup with little finger protruding.) The play is not very serious, because probability is too often sacrificed to "good theatre." Could a decent girl announce her engagement to a company of strangers before telling her parents? Could a butcher in a small town put down £6,000 without feeling the draught? Could a vulgar little creature like the girl that appeared in a bathing-suit ever be invited to a country house of this sort? But the entertainment is robust and continuous.

"Julius Cæsar," in Modern Dress at the Festival Theatre, Cambridge

There are two points of approach from which a producer may present a Shakespeare play in modern dress. He may aim at revealing something about Shakespeare, and about the universal aspects of things which are alive in Shakespeare's plays, or he may aim at exposing something about the modern world. A recent New York performance of *Julius Cæsar* aimed at the latter. It appeared to the producer that Cæsar, if played in the style of a robot got up to look like Mussolini, could very well be used as a symbol of Dictatorship, and that Brutus, if the part were consistently underplayed and judiciously cut, could very well be used as a symbol of a flabby and ineffectual Liberalism. The theme of the play became simply that this Brutus would never conquer the forces of Fascism. Since Shakespeare had seen rather more in his story than this, and had created his major interests in a serious presentation of the results of a pure and noble idealism in a world ruled in the main by self-interested action, and in a study of the clashing personalities which appear in any group of political leaders in any age of the world's history, the play had to be drastically mutilated. The performance at Cambridge had none of this deliberate falsification. The contemporary implications arose naturally from Shakespeare's text: and, to be candid, there are not really so very many of them. Shakespeare's Cæsar has so much more in him of the late Lord Curzon than of Mussolini that one hardly thinks of him as a grave menace to human liberties, and it is indeed a weakness of the play that so very little is shown or reported of his actions to justify the conspiracy, that the murder is apt to appear the butchery which Anthony calls it. This was further emphasised at Cambridge by the playing of the morning scene in Cæsar's house as comedy, with Cæsar busy with his grape-fruit and coffee, Calpurnia reading out the terrors of the night as sensational items in the *Daily Express*, and the use of the telephone to call up the priests on the subject of sacrifices and success. But it made such successful comedy that it was difficult to disapprove. Richard Wattis as Brutus, Richard Longman as Cassius, and Harold Young as Marc Antony were all admirable. There is nothing specifically Roman, Elizabethan or modern in these men, but their universality was emphasised rather than weakened by their contemporary clothes, and they took on an immediate and vivid reality. It is perhaps inevitable that a performance of Shakespearean tragedy in modern dress should involve a slight drop in dignity of tone and pitch, but it was unfortunate that the Festival company, with very few exceptions, accented this by speaking the verse as if it had the clipped cadences of twentieth-century conversation. In spite of this, however, the performance never lost interest, and it is a pity that it should not have a wider audience.

"Fidelio," at Covent Garden

No music-lover should miss the chance of hearing the present production of *Fidelio* at Covent Garden, the first night of which was last Tuesday. It may not be performed more than a second time in spite of the fact that the cast is magnificent and the performance by far the best and most satisfying ever heard at Covent Garden in this generation. That magnificent dramatic soprano, Rose Pauly, whose performance as Elektra made such an impression the week before, gave a sublime performance as Leonora. Some connoisseurs may not approve of the type of voice, thinking that a more lyrical, more femininely appealing voice like that of Lotte Lehmann is more suited to the part, but others will not agree with them. Never, not even by Lotte Lehmann in her prime, has the great aria *Abschenlicher* been so magnificently sung. Pauly is a great actress and one of the finest operatic artists living. The rest of the cast, including the Danish tenor Helge Roswaenge, Ludwig Weber, Fritz Krenn and Irma Beilke, were worthy of the Leonora, while Sir Thomas Beecham and his orchestra rose splendidly to the occasion.

London Theatre Studio

The third show given by students leaving after two years' training by Michel Saint-Denis has been prolonged for an extra week. *Electra* in Sheppard's translation is an extremely fine production in which Miss Lalage Lewis rages in the finest tradition of romantic tragic acting against the background of a perfectly stylised chorus. The points to criticise are the dresses and scenery, and perhaps the music, but such details scarcely matter when one is listening to actors who understand what they say and act so well, and bring out the astonishing beauty of the words. The other items include *Fortunato*, a very amusing little farce by Alvarez Quintero, and *Juanita*, a piece of miming founded on Goya's *Desastros de la Guerra*, which though rather formless, is redeemed by the beauty and vitality of Angelica Bell. It seems likely that we shall owe a more permanent and important debt to M. Saint-Denis than such admirable productions as the *Three Sisters*, in a number of young actors and actresses trained in the traditions of the Vieux Colombier.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, May 20th—
Meeting of L.B.C. Central London Group. Subject: "Literature and the People," Conway Hall, 7.45.

SATURDAY, May 21st—
Opening of Glyndebourne Opera Festival with Verdi's "Macbeth."

SUNDAY, May 22nd—
W. B. Curry on "Is Liberalism Dead?" Conway Hall, 11.
Alfred Wareing on "The Music and Drama Bill," Group Theatre Rooms, 9 Gt. Newport Street, 8.30.

MONDAY, May 23rd—
Merttens Peace Lecture, Dr. Christian Lange on "Imperialism and Peace," Friends House, 8.
Ballets Jooss, Old Vic.

TUESDAY, May 24th—
Miss A. Ruth Fry on "The Work Before the P.P.U.," Friends House, 1.20.
Prof. André Philip on "Christianity and Present Day International Relations," Great Hall, University College, 5.
Haldane Memorial Lecture: Prof. J. B. S. Haldane on "The Marxist Philosophy," Birkbeck College, 6.
Anti-Imperialist Conference, Conway Hall, 8.

WEDNESDAY, May 25th—
Chelsea Flower Show, Royal Chelsea Hospital Gardens.

THURSDAY, May 26th—
Peace Demonstration organised by National Peace Council, Speakers include: Miss Vera Brittain, Dr. F. W. Norwood, Colston Hall, Bristol, 8.
League for the Boycott of Aggressor Nations. Meeting at Hampden School, 14 Holland Park, 8.15.
Dance Recital by Agnes de Mille, Fortune, 8.45.
"Glorious Morning," Duchess.

FRIDAY, May 27th—
28th National Peace Congress, Central Hall, Bristol. Till 29th.
Public Meeting on A.R.P. in Spain and Britain, Friends House, 8.

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

I WAS pegging tiles the other day, and a friend who is "a regular old matelot," ex-A.B. on a Q-ship, kept regaling me with little yarns while he helped me. "You've heard of Tom, the chap who deserted his ship and became the king of a cannibal island. . . . One day the fleet put in there, a landing party went ashore with an invitation to the king to visit the flagship. . . . You must know that the gold oak-leaves on an officer's hat are called dirt on the lower deck. . . . So Tom came out in a canoe to visit the fleet, and the Commander and the Captain and the Admiral stood waiting to receive the royal party. First up the ladder came a big cannibal with a big paper hat on his head with the word DIRT written on it. Then came another in another paper hat with the words: MORE DIRT. Last of all came Tom in a paper crown with the words: STILL MORE DIRT written round it." The point of this silly story is Tom—the King of the Cannibal Island, the symbol in men's minds of the romantic tradition. He sailed, I suppose, on every ship, from the days when the first canoes ran out from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific; he was aboard the Egyptian galley which, keeping the noonday sun always to starboard, circumnavigated the Cape. Romanticism is closely connected with the sea: it came into existence when the first boat returned to its port of departure minus Tom, who has always been its hero. Civilised men still dream that one day they will emulate him and find:

> A South Sea Island . . .
> Sun-drenched sands, limpid water, leaning palms, and thundering reef . . .
> Canoes that drift on still lagoons and fishing with harpoons . . .
> Wild oranges, sea centipedes, coconut cream, and apricot poi . . .
> Black beaches, waterfalls, and coral groves . . .
> The early navigators, Wallis, Bougainville, and Cook; how they came there, what they found . . .
> The Golden Age, the beautiful race of noble root, the happy life, the fearless land . . .
> The women . . .
> And how the world destroyed its age-long dream . . .

* * *

These words are quoted from the list of Contents of *The Trumpet is Mine*, by Cecil Lewis (Peter Davies, 8*s.* 6*d.*), whose *Sagittarius Rising*, an autobiography covering the years between seventeen and twenty-four, during which he was an "Ace" pilot in a fighter squadron, was reviewed by Bernard Shaw in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION two years ago. Mr. Lewis came unharmed through three years of air fighting, when a pilot's life averaged a few weeks, he taught the Chinese to fly, was a member of an air-circus . . . and much more recently he has made a trip, for a few weeks, to Tahiti. *The Trumpet is Mine* is a peculiar book: it gives a picture of Tahiti as it actually is to-day; seen by a romantic traveller, whose notes of the present are interspersed with lots of information about the history of Polynesia and of what the unspoilt natives were like when Cook and Bougainville saw them, and of how they have been ruined and degraded by religion, drink and disease brought from Europe. What is agreeable about Mr. Lewis is that though he is as romantic as an Englishman can be (which is saying a lot) he has a streak of something practical and *terre-à-terre* in his nature of which he is not in the least ashamed. He quotes D. H. Lawrence:

> The feelings I don't have, I don't have
> The feelings I don't have, I won't say I have.

He carries out not only that admirable precept of conduct but also its more difficult converse: "The feelings I do have, I will say I have." He arrived in Tahiti with dreams of golden island girls . . . he duly met golden island girls. Several friends on the island busied themselves to find him a really satisfactory wife while he was on the island, but their efforts were not very successful. First there was Hinà, "a superb young savage . . . breath-taking at fifty yards."

> "Hinà," he called. "Viens ici. Il y a un type qui veut te marier." His Tahitian friends however disapproved: "She likes whisky," said Rosa. There was a certain tension in the air. Evidently none of them liked the idea.

Mr. Lewis had had a lucky escape.

> I am well aware that, to some, this preoccupation shared by all, including myself, with the business of finding me a "wife" may seem in questionable taste. It would be perfectly easy for me to skip the episode entirely, hint at it vaguely, or write up an episode into a grand passion and so put the usual sentimental gloss over it. I have not done this because I am trying to tell the truth. It is a commodity at a discount in the world to-day.

* * *

The natural preoccupation of Mr. Lewis and his friends is the making of the book: much the best part of it, because of this he saw what some of the Tahitians really were like and is able to give a sharp picture, and not a generalised blur.

> Marama, for instance, was proud to be seen among the crowds with her Popaa; but the truth was that I bored her to death. My lack of understanding of her people, her language, her customs; my curiosity about everything, that she could not be bothered to satisfy; her feeling that I was slightly ridiculous and conspicuous: all this resulted in a continual change of mood with her, her natural kindly good manners alternating with a sullen silence.

The passage is characteristic: very few men intent on an island romance, after sailing off to a native festival on another island, with a lovely brown girl crowned with flowers, would have bothered to look deeper than her brown skin. Mr. Lewis understood her feelings, which are common enough: class distinctions are perhaps more unbridgeable than racial ones, and there are thousands of factory girls, or Mayfair debutantes, who would have felt just the same as Marama when facing the ordeal of going about among their own people with a foreigner of completely different class.

Mr. Lewis gave a set of the proofs of this book to his father, a Nonconformist minister, and has included the excellent serious discussion which followed. Lewis senior pointed out that Tahiti had produced nothing whatsoever and that it was therefore absurd to consider the life of lotus-eating islanders preferable to the richness, variety and wisdom of Europe. "You can only exert power against opposition, you can only conquer, if there's something to overcome." Lewis junior did not point out the oddity of a Christian minister's exalting power and conquest above love and peace, but replied that the virtues of suffering and labour were a mixture of Puritanism and Napoleonism which has produced nothing but war and persecution, and that he would willingly sacrifice human achievements to human happiness. Would that all brave men would learn the same from war.

* * *

The Trumpet is Mine should be read by people who like that sort of book and compared with the picture of unspoilt, unsophisticated natives recorded in *Van Zanten's Happy Days*, a translation of which was published about 1922 by Gyldendal. Van Zanten was not writing about Tahitians, but I remember his book as one of the best and frankest about a white man in the South Seas. What is the difference? There are still garlands of flowers, and smiling faces . . . but their firm ivory-white teeth have gone, and, in spite of palm and coral, there is a sort of slumminess among the people, who are being steadily ousted by the Chinese. Van Zanten, a Dane, described a world in which the people are as fresh and clean as the coral sand, and quite wild, because they did not work. I am glad of Mr. Lewis's second book, because it sent me to his first, with which it cannot compare in merit. *Sagittarius Rising* (Peter Davies, 3*s.* 6*d.*) is, after *War Birds*, the best book I have read about fighting in the air. It gives the strain of air-fighting most convincingly and the absence of all standards which alone enabled those heroic children to go on. The note on Ball dancing round a red magnesium flare as he played his fiddle at night is something I shan't forget. Better than any of the horrors of air fighting is the account of landing a plane in a thick fog. But all the flying, and the book is almost all flying, gives the feel of it.

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ORIGINS OF THE WAR

British Documents on the Origins of the War. Vol. X. Part II. Edited by G. P. GOOCH and H. W. TEMPERLEY. *H.M. Stationery Office.* £1.

After fourteen years of arduous labour, Messrs. Gooch and Temperley, aided by the scholarly work of Professor Lillian Penson, have at last completed their labours. We now have, they assure us, every vital document which throws light on the evolution of British foreign policy from 1898 until the outbreak of the war. The memoranda and despatches they print are accompanied by all the relevant annotations from the ministers and officials concerned. They are admirably arranged; and the editors' notes are full enough to be appropriately helpful at every stage. It is unnecessary to insist upon their immense value to the historian. All over the world, students will ponder on the lessons of these volumes. They are indispensable to anyone who would grasp at first hand the mechanics of the modern state.

The present volume is concerned with five subjects—the Bagdad Railway, the Portuguese Colonies, the Mediterranean Agreements, especially that between Grey and Cambon of November, 1912, the tension between France, Germany and Great Britain of 1912–14, and the similar tension with Russia between March and July of 1914. The flood of light thrown upon these issues is always of great importance, if of unequal value. It is probable that the student of the technique of imperialism will find the documents on the Anglo-German negotiations about the Portuguese colonies a perfect example of the kind of problem about which J. A. Hobson and Lenin have written in classic books. Out of an entirely dishonourable secret treaty for which the Salisbury Government in 1898 was responsible, we find Grey struggling to dispose of property that is not his, while he keeps to the strict letter of the Anglo-Portuguese alliance. It was not, of course, a possible adventure; and the picture that emerges of the double-dealer trying to maintain all the habits of a gentleman deserves description from the pen of a Swift. The negotiations over the Bagdad Railway are more important, though they are not more revealing. The immense ability of the Foreign Office officials, the genius for half-truths, for statements capable of refined interpretation, the close connection between foreign policy and economic interests, all these come out with startling clarity. The despatches on the general diplomatic position are in the highest degree illuminating. If they mean anything, they seem clearly to show a body of keen observers in the grip of vast and impersonal forces quite above their power of transcendence. Documents like the report from Sir F. Bertie of his remarkable conversation with Baron Stumm (pp. 421–4) reveal remarkably the kind of influence the influential unofficial ambassadors of our own time exert on the shaping of the formal direction of affairs. The hint, the half-inference, the guess, the semi-genial pressure, these have to be read to be seen in their full perspective. One is left with the feeling that, for the period this volume covers, it was already too late to find the effective basis of accommodation. The principals were already manoeuvring for essential positions. Most of what is here recorded represents minor tactical moves behind which the essential tones were being massed. They read, now, like an interlude of quasi-peace in a drama the main participants in which were aware, or uneasily half-conscious, would end in tragedy.

No one who reads these pages will ever be inclined again to think that the conduct of foreign policy is a simple affair; no one, either, could remain easy in his mind about the strategy that is involved in imperial interests. The anxiety to placate Germany at the expense of Portugal, the urgency that, in the effort to placate, South Africa shall have her full share of the spoils, have a fascinating resemblance to the Abyssinian negotiations of the last few years. One emerges from it all with a good deal of admiration for Sir Eyre Crowe—always able, always clear-sighted, always with a keen eye for the main chance. I confess that I do not fully understand the self-portrait of Sir Edward Grey in these pages. There are despatches and annotations one could quote which could well be summarised as a picture of a good man struggling with adverse conditions he had inherited rather than made. But there is also here a Sir Edward Grey who reminds one of the profound truth of Lord Haldane's great aphorism that a simple man has never been the Foreign Secretary of Great Britain; the significance, in this regard, of No. 307, in the context of Nos. 319, 324, 333, 380, and, above all, 267 (to take only the most notable) is fascinating. One learns what Lord Grey meant when he wrote to the Princess Lieven, "I am a great lover of morality, public and private, but the intercourse of nations cannot be strictly regulated by that rule." HAROLD J. LASKI

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This book, which is written for the New Fabian Research Bureau, deals with the past history and present constitution of the British Army and suggests the lines along which it should be reformed by a Labour Government.

Major Attlee in his Introduction says of the author that, "while I must not be taken as agreeing with all his judgments or concurring with all his proposals, although I concur generally in his suggestions for reform, I think that he has done a useful service in exploring a field too much neglected hitherto by members of the Labour Party."

The historical sketch, though brief, is interesting. Before 1870 commissions not only were bought, but were sold on retirement, the proceeds furnishing the equivalent of a pension. And we find that, "even as late as the Crimean War, the rigours of army life appear to have been tempered for the officers," though not for the rank and file, "for Sir Colin Campbell is to be found regretting, in a letter to the Queen, the laxity of discipline among the officers, in that they were continually returning home."

Laxity of discipline at a later date culminated in the events of March, 1914, when, in the words of Carson's biographer, "the British Army at the Curragh crumbled in the hands of its Commander-in-Chief." This tale is told in damning detail, and from it Mr. Clive draws two lessons for a future Labour Government; first, to take firm action from the outset—the pre-war Liberal Government was hopelessly weak and dilatory—against such proceedings as Carson's or Sir Henry Wilson's either inside or outside the Army, and thus offer a secure rallying point to all those officers who would put their duty first if given a chance;

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secondly, to take every opportunity to increase the intelligence and initiative of the men in the ranks so that, were their officers to go wrong, they would not blindly follow their lead.

Mr. Clive discusses the practical and immediate reforms which the next Labour Government should introduce in order to give effect to its declared policy. These reforms fall into three groups. (1) The method of recruitment of officers and their pay and conditions of service thereafter; (2) improvements in the conditions of the non-commissioned ranks; and (3) civil liberties for the soldier.

This is the best part of the book, and the suggestions made deserve careful study. The present shortage of officers could easily be made good by promotions from the ranks, and these promotions would help, jointly with other reforms, to stimulate recruiting.

Mr. Clive proposes, as an immediate reform, an increase to 50 per cent. in the proportion of new commissions granted from the ranks. This is apparently the present proportion in the French Army, which is regarded by many good judges as the most efficient in the world. In France any N.C.O. who possesses the necessary qualifications may sit for a competitive examination and, if successful, becomes an officer. Many such officers have reached the highest commands.

It would be interesting to know the practice, both in this matter and in others touched by Mr. Clive's proposals, in the Armies of the Dominions and of the Scandinavian countries, and also in those of the Soviet Union and the United States. Here there is a first-class piece of research to be done; a comparative study of Army organisation, with a view to military efficiency on the one hand, and the relation of the Army to the contemporary social structure on the other. Our political problem is to work out, in our characteristic British setting, a scheme of realisable reforms which will give us a more efficient and, at the same time, a Democratic Army.

Mr. Clive is to be congratulated on turning our thoughts in this direction, and also on successfully avoiding the use of the deplorable word "democratisation," a typical example of what has aptly been called "Suet-pudding English." HUGH DALTON

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NEW NOVELS

The Scapegoat Dances. By MARK BENNEY. *Peter Davies.* 7s. 6d.
Cancel All Vows. By LILO LINKE. *Constable.* 8s. 6d.
Time Will Knit. By FRED URQUHART. *Duckworth.* 7s. 6d.
Minimum Man. By ANDREW MARVELL. *Gollancz.* 8s. 6d.
1649. By JACK LINDSAY. *Methuen.* 10s.

After his autobiography, Mr. Benney, the ex-burglar, has tried his hand at the inevitable novel about the London underworld. The book is not as consistently good as *Low Company* was, and the names of three characters, Tink, Wenna and Moonshine, with their suggestion of a Barrie declassé, indicate the perhaps not unexpected nature of the weakness. Still *The Scapegoat Dances* is an engrossing document with the stamp of an unusual and restless introverted mind on it, and Mr. Benney has an extraordinary eye for people. Solman comes out of the Scrubs after five years and drifts at once, from loneliness and instinct, to the old haunts in Soho. If he is aloof and feels shut out, this is not due to reformation; prison has had the effect of withdrawing him from living. There he could hide himself behind books, words and ideas—is he any different, here, from Tchekov's eternal student?—and the habit persists outside. With his tags from Jung and Freud, his fragmentary theory of "repetition-compulsion" and so on, he is on the quaint side; but if "Don't Send My Boy to Prison" were rewritten nowadays the word "complex" would have to replace "temptation." The criminal's self-importance tells him there is something decorative as well as justificatory in the new demonology of psychological fatalism. Solman, anyway, is aware of his own glibness, and finds that a touch of Freud and Kraft-Ebbing gives him kudos in Greek Street. But Mr. Benney is too good an observer of his world to let his theories do the book a permanent injury. He always comes back to people in the end.

The one theory that rings true is his theory of "guts." Pathetically and grimly the insistence on guts directs all these people who sit about in the Soho cafés. The little Jewish receiver will do only the things he is afraid of; the "ponces" nerve themselves to fight on principle. And the passion for guts leads to some excellent comic effects in the respectable amorous career of Solman's employer, who runs a drinking club. He leaves his wife because she snivels, returns to her when she scatters a gang of rugger-playing rowdies by hurling a vase at them—but leaves her again, just at the moment of reconciliation, because she screams at the sight of a mouse. His second wooing of a respectable widow is a comedy worthy of W. W. Jacobs. After this, one feels one can trust Mr. Benney not merely with crime but with human nature too. And Wenna, the huge, country gawk who has come up from Cornwall to go on the streets—Solman ultimately lives on her—turns out, after a dubious beginning, to be another of Mr. Benney's successes. Her mindlessness is phenomenal, strange and almost romantic at first, but finally appalling. The worse the treatment she gets from Solman, the more she likes it. She wants Solman to be the complete "ponce" type: "in a naive unconscious way she was using Solman to help her secure a recognised position among the girls she met on the streets and in the cafés." The aspirations of Greek Street and Streatham are indistinguishable and the geographical variations of morals do not, as Anatole France noted among the penguins, modify the nature of men and women. There is one excursion from the Soho hothouse to the working class squalor that keeps it supplied, and Mr. Benney is even more successful here. His portraiture is really remarkable. He catches what so many novelists miss, in this kind of sketch: the gait, the stance, the undone button, the governing passion or trait, things which are both more noticeable and more characteristic than the conventional ingredients of character-drawing and yet are so generally neglected; and his grasp of the essence of human situations is astonishing. It is an achievement to have made his nasty world both real and understandable.

The gifts of the remaining novelists are not so striking, though Miss Lilo Linke and Mr. Urquhart have a quality of their own. *Cancel All Vows* deals with another isolated world, that of the German refugees in Paris. Julius, like Mr. Benney's Solman, is a permanently injured man. The war had marked him first of all, and exile—he is a social democrat lawyer—and its consequent poverty finishes what the war began. Between him and suicide stands Marthe, also a refugee, a country girl who has had to give up her ambition to be a doctor and has become a waitress in Paris.

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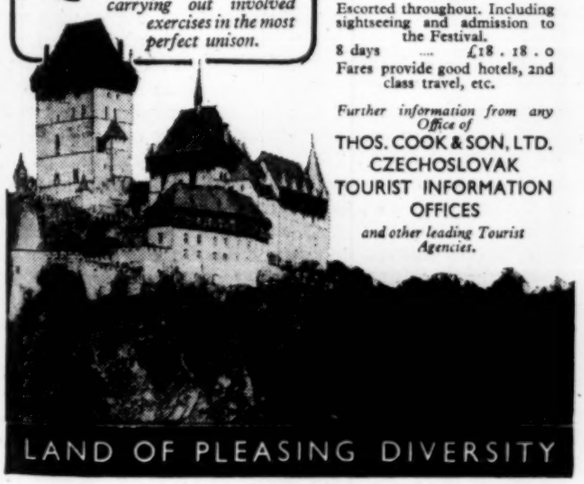

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The conflict is between the primitive and civilised types. There is an attractive moral strength and honesty about Miss Linke's writing, and she draws the pathetic, lost German colony with positive good sense and sympathy.

Mr. Urquhart is livelier: at least, his material is lively and his writing mannered. It was not, I think, a sound decision to tell the story of an American's visit to his humble Scottish relations in the American vernacular. "I sorta felt" and "I kinda knew" indicate that the tough boy's eyes are going to have a distressing mistiness throughout the narrative, and although this seems to be a convention of the Scottish novel of humble life, I think the reader should be left to raise the lump in his own throat and be his own J. M. Barrie when he wants to do so. Apart from this irritation the picture of a family's life in a dying slum is both fresh and good-humoured. The characters are talkative, coarse and good-natured, and their flow of high spirits brings home the peculiar horror of their cramped lives with great vividness. Mr. Urquhart's intention is to display briefly the kind of life that has gone on for two or three generations, to show what has miraculously flowered and what—and how much more it is—has been thwarted; but unlike many novelists with a social conscience, he has not idealised his people. They are not political abstractions; indeed to the propagandist of "the noble working class" obsession they would be a liability, with their delight in lavatory stories and dirty practical jokes. I shall remember Aunt Kate screaming out "Bless my Jimmie Johnson" every other page. *Time Will Knit* is a likeable book by a promising writer.

Minimum Man is conventional political fantasy, brisk, amusing and breathless, but with no great originality. It is fundamentally deadened by the success mentality which comes from an overdose of Left Wing propaganda. The Marxist theory of inevitability, like all uplift, is dangerous to literature, and I should have thought that even in propaganda, failure and tragedy would be far more effective apostles of idealism. Mr. Marvell's successful anti-fascist *coup d'état* of the future is brought about by a superhuman race of midgets who have appeared in N. Wales. The story of their appearance and of the adventures of the reporter who tracks them down is entertainingly told; but oh, I repeat, the embarrassment, the frustration the reader feels at the grotesque triumph when the leader of the midgets is borne amid hosannas down Whitehall on a tray! The midgets themselves are pretty conventional superhumans; and wondering why Mr. Wells is so superior in this tendencious kind of joke, I have come to the conclusion that it is due to the vein of pessimism in him which always audits the cooked accounts of fantasy. To be effective even the anti-fascist midget should have his heel of Achilles.

Mr. Lindsay has gone where other politically minded novelists could go with advantage: to the past. In 1649 King Charles I was beheaded, and that year saw the disillusion of the real revolutionaries. The rank and file of the Army had been palmed off with an execution, the programme of the Levellers—*the Agreement of the People*—was shelved and the fruits of the victory went into the hands of the new, wealthy bosses. Mr. Lindsay illustrates the many factors in the situation in London and the country through the story of one family. Some turn to fanatical religion, others to defiance, others to intrigue and graft. It is a time, rather like to-day, when everyone has an "'ism" of some kind. Mr. Lindsay is an expert in making the historical mixture; an undertone of love-hate and of that sadism which seems to be a field peculiar to the contemporary historical novelist, runs through the love affairs of his people. There is a sameness here, I thought, in his women; and there is a general tendency to overwrite and see tension everywhere. But Mr. Lindsay is a capable man; his historical matter is ably and readably introduced and, if there is something self-conscious about it all and if the erotic life of his characters recalls too much the illustrations of Matania, he succeeds in fusing his people with the period he describes.

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NEW WRITING

New Writing. No. 5. Edited by JOHN LEHMANN. *Lawrence and Wishart.* 6s.

This spring's volume has few of the earlier stars. There are only translations by Spender, and nothing by Auden, MacNeice, Plomer, Lorca, Upward, Silone. *New Writing*, on the other hand, exists to discover and encourage, rather than to reiterate. But it also seems, this time, to have few discoveries. Sommerfield, Chamson, Olyesha, James Stern have all appeared before. The sum total, all the same, is so much better than anyone except Mr. Lehmann can manage nowadays, that one doesn't particularly mind. He is the best editor we have, in spite of the hint of a tendency to let politics tip the scales, and the biennial rummage through his collection is one of the excitements of the time. Taking them in their printed order, the volume opens with three poems by Mr. Day Lewis, addressed to Death. The first and last are very good, with their grim, half-deceptive simplicity and extraordinary rhythms. Next, comes the best thing of all, *The Landauers*, by Mr. Isherwood. It is one of his sounds-before-the-storm studies of Berlin which are all about to be published together, as *The Lost*. The subject here is a Jewish family, the proprietors of a huge department store, and the children are, quite simply, masterpieces. I was comparing this story with one which comes a few pages later, *Travellers*, by Jan Petersen. The latter's subject is Mr. Isherwood's Berlin again; it is an unusually honest, economical story, and yet it seems somehow weightless against the other. Possibly one of the secrets is that Mr. Isherwood can eliminate non-essentials almost completely. He already equals Mr. Maugham as a technician, and then, of course, he has the inestimable, added advantage of being able to live in his time (which Mr. Maugham left off doing), and, consequently, of having something to say. His stories are just as adventurous, but they are not "adventure stories." There is only one suggestion, in fact, one could make; there is occasionally something a little disquieting about the way he deals with himself in his stories. He is liable to give an impression, as the story-teller, of being a shade too knowing about his characters. A little too much the cool, faintly sardonic experimenter. Curiously enough, Mr. Maugham does this too.

There are at least six more thoroughly enjoyable pieces. *Hear This Voice*, by Miguel Hernandez, translated by Inez and Stephen Spender, is an extremely moving poem on Spain. Mr. John Sommerfield has an excellent story of three hunted militiamen in a boat, *The Escape*. M. André Chamson's accounts of hurly-burlies in a French village are solidly, if a trace picturesquely, done. *The Man Who Quacked*, by Mr. Robert Waller, a newcomer, shows an erratic but original talent. There is *Liompa*, a capricious, but brilliant and poetic vision of illness by Yuri Olyesha, a Russian. This is one of the best things in the book. So is *Ladies and*

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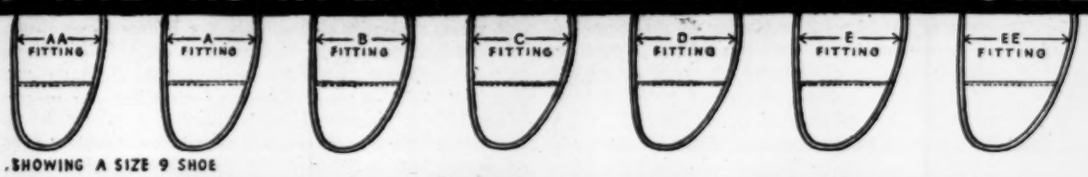

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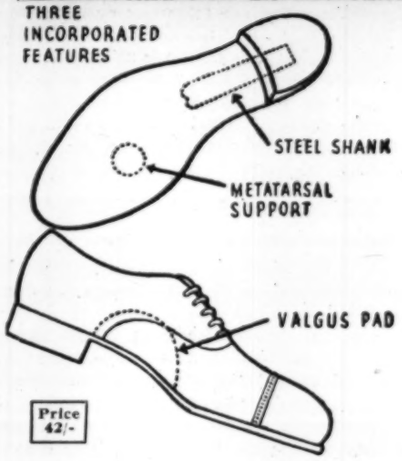

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Gentlemen, by Mr. James Stern. I have not read, for a long time, a more searching and serious, or funnier, portrait of English family life.

Apart from these, there is a slight, but very charming, story about bakers by a young Chinese writer, Chou Wên; an interesting, but possibly over-tough, account of cinema life by Miss Beatrix Lehmann, and something by Mr. Walter Allen which disappoints to a mild degree because, I suppose, one's expectations were so high. The sea story by Mr. James Hanley would normally have been one of the major items, but in this case the actual process of reading is in itself quite baffling. Finally, the only objection I have is to the reappearance of Gladkov. Russian heavy industry is a fine literary subject, but he makes it all into a kind of school spree. And there is something governessy, too, about Mr. Garry's translations.

> Katinsha was furious. . . . "And secondly, my lads, I must inform you that I shan't overlook your filthy attitude to us girls. I'll raise the matter in the Young Communist Committee."

BRIAN HOWARD

VISION AND PLANNING

Europe Rehoused. By ELIZABETH DENBY. *Allen and Unwin.* 14s.

Everyone who is interested in housing and town planning will enjoy Elizabeth Denby's book. It is useful and stimulating: a book for experts, full of interest for non-experts.

Miss Denby had a background of eight years' experience of slum clearance and rehousing in London when she set out on her European tour. She visited ten countries, but wisely selected six to write about—two winners in the war, two losers and two neutrals. She describes housing in France and Italy, Germany and Vienna, Sweden and Holland, with a general introduction dealing with the housing problem in Europe before and after the war, and a final chapter in which she summarises her conclusions and discusses the present position in this country. It is significant that a Foreword is written by Lord Horder, since, as he says, the author regards planning for health as being a fundamental part of the housing problem.

Miss Denby set out to discover how the problem of housing and planning for community life was being tackled abroad, having regard to the traditions, advantages and difficulties of each country she visited. Thus in France she points out the disastrous results of individualism, the high prices paid for land, the lack of foresight and disregard of fitness and tradition in rebuilding the devastated war areas, and sets against this the brilliant experimental work being carried out by the Department of the Seine, where creative thought has resulted in high achievement. In Italy, the contrast from the point of view of ordered planning and preservation of beautiful and interesting buildings is most striking; and while the new towns are less original than those outside Paris, they are an interesting experiment in providing civic centres for the agricultural population. In Germany, as in Italy, it is natural to find the policy of encouraging large (Aryan) families, and of subordinating the financial interests of private landowners and manufacturers to the community. Germany had an advantage in that municipalities had long ago had the foresight to acquire enough land to provide for urban extension and to include forests and open spaces within the town boundaries, but Germany, beaten in the war, had the appalling disadvantage of poverty, with the result that some of the finest building is marred by economies in the size of rooms, and the poverty of the working people Miss Denby describes as heartbreaking. The Dutch tradition of order resembles the German, and their care for beautiful buildings the Italian, but Holland has the unique difficulty of a shortage of actual space. The chapters dealing with Sweden and Vienna are the most absorbing to English readers: the spirit, the imagination, the energy and intelligence which are apparent in the work of democratic Sweden, "whose inhabitants seem to be well on the way to attaining the full life," and the unparalleled achievement of Socialist Vienna. It is revealing that success does not depend on dictatorship. Civic and national pride in beauty and good planning are as apparent in Sweden as in totalitarian States; profiteering in land, building materials and money was eliminated in Vienna more effectively even than in Fascist countries. The care of children and help given to large families is no less good in countries where babies are not regarded as little blackshirts.

Thirty-two excellent plates include panoramic views showing skill in good siting, lively pictures of workshops, lidos, nursery schools and laundries, cottage developments and good block building, and such revealing contrasts as an average day in Sheffield and in a country where factory smoke is eliminated. But even more useful to the reader who follows Miss Denby on her tour are the many tables, plans, diagrams and sketches. These deal with vital statistics, family budgets, housing finance and output; there are clear and interesting layout and ground plans, illustrations of interior design and equipment and technical details of the important Garchey system of refuse disposal. The most original diagram, and for English readers the most depressing, shows house-building output in Sweden, Holland, Germany and Great Britain between 1919 and 1936 by various agencies together with the amount expended in State subsidies. These are showered in golden rain by a Minister of Health lightly disguised as a wasp, certainly with a sting in his tail, for Great Britain has spent ninety times as much as Holland, and more than 100 times as much as Sweden, as well as more *per dwelling* than any other country.

Over 3,000,000 dwellings, impressive slum clearance, £530,553,580 spent in State subsidies in this country. It sounds a good record, but Miss Denby's book will give pause to boasters. How much of the taxpayers' money has gone to vested interests in land and materials? What about "the thoughtless vandalism that shocks visitors to every British city to-day"? How much of our new building has ruined lovely country and is in itself so poor that it is already hardly fit for habitation? We have spent money, Miss Denby urges, but not brains. We want elasticity, enterprise and variety; by all means try out the garden city idea, but as a policy for the whole country it is escapism. Experiment with high blocks provided they are principally for people without children: see what can be done with cottages at thirty to the acre on the Dutch model (cutting road space and providing long gardens). But there must be "informed control" . . . "Transcending the (building) agency, the unifying factor . . . of the directing plan," as well as adequate protection of the community against land speculation. "Have the right vision and the right action will follow" is perhaps in a sentence Miss Denby's conclusion.

IRENE T. BARCLAY

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News about Books

RECENTLY published is a new and cheaper edition of Edgar Jepson's *Memories of an Edwardian* (5s.), concerning which Harold Nicolson wrote: "He is the type of humanist that I most enjoy, a mixture of Balliol and the Savage, an echo of Samuel Butler. He has written a book which is both provocative and humane". Two new novels, *Lady Springmead* by Editha Blaikley (6s.) and *Now for the Wilderness* by K. Balbernie (7s. 6d.), claim the attention of the discriminating. Finally, Lord Alfred Douglas's *Without Apology* (10s. 6d.) is a genial book, full of good stories, which no ordinary reader can fail to enjoy.

¶ Mr. Martin Secker is managing director of *The Richards Press*, whose publishing offices are at No. 8 Charles Street, St. James's Square.

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CRIME AT THE ATHENAEUM

Appointment with Death. By AGATHA CHRISTIE. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.
Fall Over Cliff. By JOSEPHINE BELL. *Longmans.* 7s. 6d.
Arrogant Alibi. By C. DALY KING. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.
The Four False Weapons. By JOHN DICKSON CARR. *Hamish Hamilton.* 7s. 6d.
The Camera Clue. By GEORGE HARMON COXE. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.
The Body in the Trawl. By ALEC GLANVILLE. *Harrap.* 7s. 6d.
Murder by Burial. By STANLEY CASSON. *Hamish Hamilton.* 7s. 6d.
The Malinsay Massacre. By DENNIS WHEATLEY and J. G. LINKS. *Hutchinson.* 3s. 6d.

Why do members of the Athenaeum Club show an increasing tendency to purloin the Club's supply of detective stories? I learned for the first time of this distressing habit from an extract in *This England* the other week, and I was puzzled to account for it. Is it just because more members have taken to reading them that the percentage of loss has gone up? That is such a simple explanation that it may well be the right one, but I should only accept that dull solution after a complete study of the statistics. Or does an interest in major crimes conduce to minor crimes, as small boys are always supposed to be stimulated into stealing apples by watching gangster films? Or, as I prefer to conclude, is there one public-spirited member so shocked by the continuous decline in the *average* merit of modern detection that he has resolved on a private expurgation of the Club shelves by tossing over the Embankment any work that fails to reach a certain standard? If such a member there be, I applaud him and trust he will never be detected. For only by such heroic gestures can one hope to teach publishers and library committees to distinguish between books and rubbish. And the percentage of rubbish issued seems to be on the increase. For every book reviewed in this list there have been published a couple of unmentionable monstrosities that ought to be chucked into the Thames, if Mr. X at the Athenaeum does his duty. Not that the list itself is packed with masterpieces—far from it!—as only Mrs. Christie's work reaches a decent level of respectability.

The setting for *Appointment with Death* is Palestine. Mrs. Christie seems reluctant to leave the stimulus to crime provided by Poirot's casual acquaintances on his tour of the Near East. "You do see, don't you, that she's got to be killed?" is the encouraging question Poirot overhears out of his hotel window on his first night in Jerusalem. *She* is the intolerable matriarch of an American family on a world cruise, and there never was a more eligible candidate for murder. Almost too eligible, as Colonel Carbury of the Transjordan Police realises, when the wicked old woman is found dead at Petra. For not only might any one of her long-suffering, browbeaten family have done the trick, but any friend of the family (three of whom are very sexually attractive) or even a donkey boy might be suspect, so disagreeable was she to menials. Of course, we can trust Mrs. Christie not to stoop so low as an Arab super for her criminal, but for once I think she has overcrowded her stage. There are too many balls to juggle with; and Mrs. Christie is so busy keeping all our suspicions in the air that she lands herself in a psychological tangle from which there is no plausible escape. No wonder then that Poirot brings down the curtain with a run, before we have time to analyse what has gone wrong with the performance. The actual criminal and the motive for the crime are introduced into the plot with all Mrs. Christie's consummate art: even so they jut out just that tiny fraction too much for perfect inconspicuity. For once Mrs. Christie has chosen too many ingredients to mix into one of her smooth puddings.

Miss Bell is getting too emotionally involved with her Dr. Wintringham and his happy home life; I hope she is not going the way of Miss Dorothy Sayers. *Fall Over Cliff* only develops genuine gusto when Jill is rumpling David's hair on the beach, while Baby Nicholas romps around—and that has nothing to do with detection. A sequence of apparent accidents leads to an unattractive scoutmaster inheriting a great-aunt's great wealth. The scoutmaster, labouring under a suspicion that the accidents were rather too providential, asks Dr. Wintringham to investigate them on his behalf, with one very obvious and one very surprising result. Miss Bell's book would be pointless without the surprise, yet the surprise is of that far-fetched variety to which the reader reacts, not with a rapturous "Oh! yes," but an emphatic "Oh! *No!*" Miss Bell's inkling for detection will make her write much better books than *Fall Over Cliff*.

Mr. Daly King, sometimes called the Aldous Huxley of detection, tries to pull a fast one in *Arrogant Alibi*. The widow of an Egyptologist is stabbed with an Egyptian dagger during a concert in her house in Connecticut in a welter of alibis, politics and Egyptology. I find it hard to say why, but Mr. King has not mastered the baby-face technique required to pull these fast alibis and get away with them.

The Four False Weapons reintroduces Bencolin, Mr. Dickson Carr's French detective, after a long retirement. The death of Rose Klonec, *poule de luxe*, in a villa *de luxe* on the outskirts of Paris is solved after a few thrills by a laborious unwinding of the threads of coincidence. You must be a glutton for the improbables to stand it. I prefer the healthy American rough stuff of *The Camera Clue*. Mr. Coxe's press photographer-detective, Kent Murdock, gives a good run for your money over plenty of tough spots; moreover, between drinks and hard knocks, he handles an awkward problem in detection with great acumen. I don't know how American readers stand up to these high-pressure stories, but in England we are generally too punch-drunk and dizzy with the fumes of alcohol to do any solving for ourselves, and gladly leave it to any detective who cares to come along. Yet, without wishing to be captious, one might venture to ask why, if crime is so neatly and easily solved at the end, could not it be as readily solved at the very beginning *before* all the characters start chasing themselves.

The Body in the Trawl and *Murder by Burial* are neither of them constructed on pure detective lines. Mr. Glanville's work is a thriller about yachting, a subject in which he specialises. Mr. Casson is a lecturer in Archaeology and is more interesting on numismatics than on crime, or on Fascism, the third ingredient in his book. Mr. X of the Athenaeum might excusably heave both stories overboard, but I am prepared to give them the benefit of the doubt.

The new Dennis Wheatley and J. G. Links *dossier* is a disappointment. The motive for the crimes and the criminal are painfully obvious from the start, leaving only one item of the plot completely mysterious. The explanation of this little riddle is highly ingenious, but one brilliant idea is not enough to bulk out either a book or a *dossier*. Incidentally, the narrative of *The Malinsay Massacre* is not made more vivid but only jerky and discontinuous by the *dossier* method. This becomes a source of irritation by the end, proving that only good plots deserve *dossiers;* bad ones thereby enhance their faults.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

CATS

The Tiger in the House. By CARL VAN VECHTEN. *Cape.* 12s. 6d.

Mr. Carl Van Vechten's *The Tiger in the House* has been republished after eighteen years. It is curious, witty, encyclopaedic. While only dogs should be allowed to write (or read) about dogs, almost anyone with a seeing eye and a taste for the mysterious can produce an agreeable book on cats. Mr. Van Vechten has collected his: how many oddities one meets for the first time in his pages! I did not know before that cats are nowhere mentioned in the Bible; that catgut comes out of lambs; that the Ancient Egyptians shaved their eyebrows and went into mourning when a cat died; that an Antikatzverein was founded in Westphalia in 1897. The Chinese look into a cat's eyes to read the time, the people of Suffolk to learn the state of the tides. At various periods in history the cat has been deified, and subjected to indescribable torments. But, suffering or exalted, it has remained itself; there have been no moral cats, no cat listeners or open-armed cats, no cats that went on errands. They keep to their religion. It is understandable that the Chinese should have worshipped them: the sphinx-like pose was congenial, though in Chinese painting the cat has sometimes the surprised nimble look of a monkey. This dual nature makes the cat one of the most difficult animals for an artist to depict.

> The beauty of the cat (writes Mr. Van Vechten) is very deceptive, for under the grace of the furry exterior lie concealed steel-like muscles. Now the artist who indicates the grace and softness usually misses the strength, and the artist who seizes the strength usually does so at the expense of other qualities. The cat's eye alone, an eye skilfully blending innocence and mystery, an eye which changes with the hours of the day, offers insuperable difficulties. "Nothing is so difficult,"

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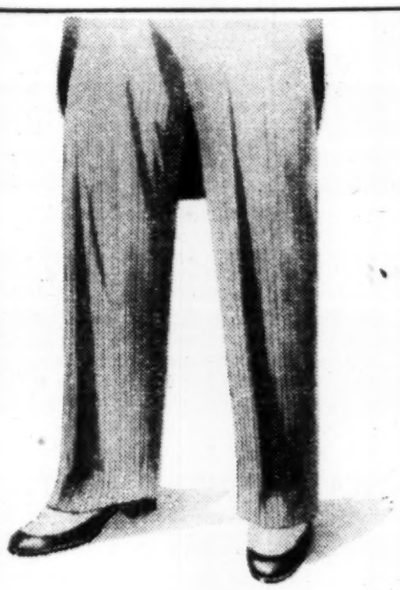

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observes Champfleury, "as to paint the cat's face, which as Moncrif justly observes, bears a character of 'finesse and hilarity.'" . . .

"Hilarity," in that last phrase from Moncrif, is unexpected—and excellent. Indeed, among the hundreds of literary descriptions which Mr. Van Vechten refers to or quotes in the course of his book this seems to me the best. Moncrif is a writer of whom I should like to know more. He published anonymously in Paris in 1727 a book "gravement frivole," called *Les Chats*, which contained among other things a new theory of the music; by listening to caterwauls he had been led to appreciate the quarter-tones and slurs in Eastern music. Similar touches of fantasy seem to have been not uncommon in the eighteenth century.

Valmont de Bomare describes a birth at the fair of Saint-Germain over which had been inscribed the single word, *Miaulique*. In the interior some cats sat on a table before a piece of music and at a signal given by a monkey they negotiated feline melodies and harmonies. The whole proceeding seems a perfect symbol for the *chef d'orchestre* and the *prime donne* at the opera. In 1758 an animal trainer named Bisset gave what he actually called a "Cats' Opera" in a hall near the Haymarket in London.

Many early engravings preserve the tradition of grave extravagance; and Grandville, in the nineteenth century, added a touch of genius to obsession. All the animals in his extraordinary *Vie privée et publique des Animaux*, but particularly the cats, are devilishly human and animal at the same time. They walk on their hind legs, dressed in contemporary fashion. "The Entrance of Puff"—reproduced by Mr. Van Vechten—is a masterpiece. Puff, a lordly Persian, silk hat in hand, possesses the startled dignity of a buck, while a little white puss in a flounced dress curtseys towards him. How well the hard, bright look which passes between strangers has been caught on the faces of the two cats! And examining their surroundings more carefully one discovers other animal forms—a couple of monkey footmen, no more than knee-high, the portrait of a huntsman with bull-dog head on the wall, ornaments in the shape of dolphins and owls; the fantasy extends even to the pattern of the carpet.

It will be gathered that this is a book less for simple-minded cat lovers than for those who are attracted by the curiosities to which such a subject, if treated encyclopaedically, will lead them. Mr. Van Vechten's bibliography is nearly fifty pages long; if he misses anything at all it is on the psychological and biological side. His object has been to study the cat myth, and he adds to that myth, charmingly. G. W. STONIER

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICER

The Local Government Officer. By L. HILL. *Allen and Unwin.* 5s.

This little book is of interest from several points of view. In the first place, it is the only volume so far published in this country which is devoted entirely to local government officers. In the second place, its inclusion in the Town and County Hall series is an indication of the growing recognition of the importance of personnel questions in public administration. Thirdly, the author is the General Secretary of that very remarkable professional organisation, The National Association of Local Government Officers which, under his leadership, has for many years been playing a prominent part in helping both the general public and local government officers themselves to recognise the importance of the function which they are called upon to fulfil.

This aspect of local government is in the throes of a minor revolution, or perhaps one should say transformation. The crux of the matter is whether there shall be, in effect, a single local government service or as many local government services as there are local authorities. Most enlightened students and practical administrators are in favour of the former, but there are multitudes of councillors belonging to all political parties, supported by that powerful body the Association of Municipal Corporations, who cling to the traditional view that every local authority has a right to appoint whatever officers it desires on whatever conditions it thinks fit. This view is doomed to extinction despite the stubbornness with which it is held. The emergence of an essentially unified profession of local government officers was clearly foreshadowed by the Report of the Hadow Committee, and has been considerably assisted by the enactment last year of a system of universal superannuation.

Mr. Hill manages to combine within his book an account of the conditions of employment in local government, the methods of recruitment and training, the qualifications which officers are required to possess, and similar technical details, with a discussion of the broader issues of the relationship between the officer and the local authority on the one hand, and between the officer and the public on the other. He has, perhaps wisely, relegated a considerable amount of the factual material to lengthy appendices, but one or two of his chapters on the broader issues would have been improved if they had been given a more substantial content. For example, the chapter on "The Qualities of a Public Servant" is somewhat vague and unsatisfying. It is indisputable, as Mr. Hill argues, that the successful administrator cannot rely solely on the mere authority of his office, and that the business of inspiring confidence is essential to his task; but statements of this kind bring one to the beginning of the problem rather than to the end of it.

One of the most interesting parts of the book is the explanation which it contains of the large measure of success attained by the Whitley Council movement among local authorities, and the author is an ardent advocate of its further extension. The book also contains an energetic defence of local government administration against the complacent business-man who takes the traditional view concerning all activities other than those showing a financial profit. This part of the book is very timely in view of the probability that in the near future we shall see another economy crusade on the lines of the Geddes Axe or the 1931 campaign, which proved so disastrous to the stability and development of the social services. The intelligent citizen who wishes to be forearmed against the appearance of such an attack would do well to read this book. Even the expert may find things in it of which he was nor previously aware, such, for example, as the fact that among other kinds of officials employed by local authorities are organists, pathologists, journalists, publicity experts, restaurant managers, musicians, golfers, entertainment organisers, chaplains of all denominations, rat-catchers, river pilots, and water diviners!

W. A. ROBSON

SHORTER NOTICE

The Story of Achilles (The Iliad translated into plain English). By W. H. D. ROUSE. *Nelson.* 7s. 6d.

Dr. Rouse's rendering of the Iliad follows the same lines as his Odyssey, which was published last year and reviewed in these columns. His contention is that Homer's language is "natural" and simple and should be translated into plain and not into artificial or high-flown English. That is a sound principle; but it can be overdone, and Dr. Rouse is prone to overdo it, and to rob us of some of the dignity and beauty of diction which belong equally with its naturalness to Homer's poetry. And often his "plainness" seems quite unnecessary. Why, for example, should the sombre majesty of the opening line of the Iliad—

μῆνιν ἄειδε, θεὰ, Πηληιάδεω Ἀχιλῆος
οὐλομένην . . . . . .

("Sing, Goddess, the deadly wrath of Peleus' son Achilles") be lost in "An angry man—there is my story: the bitter rancour of Achilles, prince of the house of Peleus?" Dr. Rouse observes, justly enough, that the Olympian gods, whose brawls and pranks figure so largely in the poem, are the comic background to the tragedy below. But does it hit quite the right note to make Hera call Zeus "you dreadful creature" (αἰνότατε Κρονίδη), or Zeus say to Thetis, "Here's a bad business! You'll set me curry-worrying with Hera and make me scold her again?" Apart from this vice (which is less flagrant in the Iliad than in the Odyssey) Dr. Rouse's translation is to be commended for its vigour and vividness.

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

THE record of the month is certainly the H.M.V. set of the Brahms *Clarinet Quintet*, played by Reginald Kell and the Busch Quartet (4 discs). Most people will be familiar with the music, the miraculous product of the composer's last and ripest years. For over eight years I have been playing the admirable Columbia records of Charles Draper and the Lener, but the present performance has revealed fresh beauties, particularly in the passionately nostalgic *adagio*. Nowhere else in Brahms is there a parallel to those throbbing strings and wild, whirling clarinet arpeggios; the passage is based on the improvisatory, ornamental style of Hungarian gypsy music, and for all its exquisite, sophisticated workmanship it remains a rhapsody. Its profound and spontaneous pathos sets one wondering how much of his inner self Brahms sometimes buried beneath the trappings of orthodox thematic "development." The last two movements, fine though they are,

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produce inevitably a slight feeling of anti-climax, as would any imaginable ending, however Schubertian, to the *Unfinished Symphony*. I cannot overpraise, indeed I cannot praise adequately, the artistry of Kell and the Busch; the recording too (but for a prickly surface on one side) is ideal.

Another fine set is Beethoven's *String Trio in C minor*, Op. 9, No. 3, a work new to the gramophone, played by the Brussels Trio, and complete on three small Columbias for nine shillings. I recommend it strongly, and urge people not to imagine, from its low opus number, that it is an immature work. Composed in Beethoven's twenty-eighth year, it belongs to the same period as the noble *Largo e mesto* of the Op. 10, No. 3 *Sonata*, which in Rolland's words "first revealed the full grandeur of his soul." The Trio is not only a brilliant solution of the special problems of texture raised by this difficult medium, but a work of true Beethovenian power and concision, which shows that he was already excited by the key of C minor. Mozart is not shown at his best in his *Sonata for 2 pianos in D major* (K. 448); this elegant, rippling music is delightful to play, but the mere listener grows conscious that much of it is no more than agreeable eighteenth-century chatter. The neat but too square playing of Wiener and Doucet and rather hollow recording do not help (2 Cols.). Col. also issue two solo piano records: Petri is brilliant in the Schubert-Tausig *Andante and Variations in B minor*, but the music does not take wing until the second side; while Kitain is only moderately successful in the wistful *Chopin A minor Mazurka*, Op. 17, No. 4, and the "*Revolutionary*" *Etude*.

Of all Beethoven's symphonies the *Eighth* is perhaps the most captivating, the one we are most often in the mood to enjoy. All the more pity that there should be no wholly adequate recording. The latest is that of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Koussevitsky (3 H.M.V.s), a magnificently vital performance, expecially notable for the tearing, unbuttoned high spirits of the Finale. Unfortunately it is spoiled by harsh recording with inadequate bass and some evidence of studio carelessness: at the very outset we encounter that curious phenomenon known as "pre-echo," and at one of the breaks it is plain that not all the orchestra knew that they had to stop. The recent Weingartner set shows the Vienna echo at its most troublesome, making nonsense of Beethoven's sudden silences, and sometimes even of his harmony. One is thus forced back to the old, but still very fair, Boult recording; only it must be admitted that he makes heavy going of the crisp "tick-tock" humours of the *Allegretto scherzando*. For some reason the Boston Promenade Orchestra gets very much better recording than its big brother, and its performance, under Fiedler, of the *Midsummer Night's Dream Overture* (2 H.M.V.s, with the *March*), is on the whole the best version available. But once again I beg Columbia to give us a recording by Beecham of this overture and the *Hebrides*—the cream of Mendelssohn. Under Bruno Walter the Vienna Philharmonic has always played Johann Strauss incomparably, and now that they are presumably hard at work practising the Horst Wessel Song we must, I suppose, count ourselves lucky to have their splendid new H.M.V. recording of the brilliant *Kaiser Waltz* (Op. 437).

Unfamiliar Haydn is always welcome; every musician must hang his head at the thought that only one-tenth of this great master's works are even printed. Two Deccas contain selections from an opera called *Die Welt auf dem Monde* ("*The World on the Moon*"), played by the Charles Brill Orchestra. I have been able to discover nothing about this Wellsian-sounding opera except that it was written in 1777. The music, presumably intended for ballet, is vital, fresh and varied; the playing a little blunt, though pleasantly vigorous; the recording not quite up to the best recent Decca work. H.M.V. issue a most attractive ten-inch record of Haydn's *Overture in D major* coupled with two little Mozart marches, played stylishly but not very precisely by the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra under Fendler. The third Haydn issue is a *Concerto*, that for piano in D, the only one (of twenty) that is ever played; Mme. Roesgen-Champion treats it with great delicacy, to the accompaniment of a rather thinly recorded French orchestra (2 Cols.). A much greater piano concerto, Mozart's *K.* 453 *in G major*, is recorded on 3 H.M.V.s by Edwin Fischer and his Chamber Orchestra. One of the finest of the whole series, it has long been familiar on the gramophone in the excellent Col. version of Dohnanyi, who took 4 records. The new set, good as it is, cannot be regarded as pure gain: the compression has involved some awkward turns, there are too many slipped notes in the first movement, and an occasional loss of orchestral detail in the Papageno-like finale. But Fischer's playing of the *Andante* is melting, and on the whole this set can be warmly recommended. A third concerto is Schumann's for violin, about which so much extra-musical fuss has been made; it is recorded on 4 H.M.V.s by Menuhin and the New York Philharmonic (Barbirolli) in a performance which could scarcely be improved—though the recording could. Most people who like Schumann at all will find themselves immediately attracted to this work by its charming themes, true children of the composer's Florestan and Eusebius moods. With repetition, however, the poverty of the orchestration and the weakness of the structure become increasingly apparent: for example, the development of the first movement consists largely of turning the opening theme from the minor into the major and the second subject, conversely, from the major into the minor.

There are some exceptionally interesting opera records. First Mozart. Tauber (Parlo.) recaptures any musical laurels he may have shed during the past decade by his exquisite singing of *O wie ängstlich* from *Die Entführung* and (only slightly less good) Tamino's first aria from *Die Zauberflöte*; diction and phrasing are masterly, and the joy of hearing a German tenor caress melody instead of bullying it may be imagined. Tiana Lemnitz (H.M.V.) faces one of the most difficult of all tasks in the Countess's two arias from *Figaro*, for which we dream of a soprano with the taste and technical control of Reginald Kell's clarinet. Mme. Lemnitz earns our gratitude by singing in Italian, and produces a most acceptable record; but her phrasing falls short of the ideal, and her tone is over-tremulous. There are three excerpts from *Fidelio*. Weingartner and the L.S.O. provide the first recording (an admirable one) of the *Leonora No.* 2 (2 Cols) which must not be regarded as a mere sketch for *No.* 3: though the thematic material is the same, it has a beautiful and wholly different development section. (A brilliant discussion of the relationship of the two will be found in the fourth volume of Tovey's *Essays in Musical Analysis*.) Leonora's great aria is given with Niagara-like splendour by Kirsten Flagstad (H.M.V.): technically nothing could be more magnificent, but Leonora's weary agony of spirit is not conveyed, and as interpretation I prefer Frida Leider's record (Lotte Lehmann unpardonably omits the recitative). Decca issue the only available complete recording of Florestan's scene

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from Act II; it is well sung by Franz Völker, who misses, however, the visionary exaltation of the *allegro* which made Berlioz faint with emotion. From Decca comes another timely release: the wonderful sleep-walking scene from Verdi's *Macbeth* finely declaimed by Gertrud Rünger; though sung in German, and lacking the muttered exclamations of the doctor and waiting gentlewoman, this record (paired with *O don fatale* from *Don Carlo*) can be wholeheartedly recommended. Parlophone issue two scenes from Strauss's *Aegyptische Helena* well sung by Rose Pauly, a record whose pre-Nazi date can be guessed from the fact that Fritz Busch conducts the Berlin State Opera Orchestra; the music is fluent late Strauss, no more; what we want is some of Mme. Pauly's tremendous Elektra. The interesting reissue (Parlo.) of two arias recorded in 1904 by Aïno Ackté shows that this famous temperamental Salome had a pure and well-controlled voice; collectors will find the brass band accompaniment to the *Jewel Song* deliciously droll. Elisabeth Schumann (H.M.V.) is perfection itself in three Schubert songs: *Des Baches Wiegenlied, Wiegenlied* (" Schlafe, schlafe ") and *Der Schmetterling*.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

Week-end Competitions

No. 428

Set by Sylvia Lynd

We offer the usual prizes (Two Guineas and Half a Guinea) for some *Rhymes for the Unrepressed* on the pattern of Struwel Peter or of Jane and Anne Taylor, but, in harmony with the spirit of the Modern Nursery, each enforcing an unmoral. No rhyme should be more than 24 lines in length and the subjects should be " Greedy " Richard, " Cruel " Frederick, and " Dirty " Jim.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, May 27th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 426

Set by V. Sackville-West

The remark " Doubtless God could have made a better berry, but doubtless God never did," might well be attributed to Dr. Johnson at a guess by anyone ignorant of its true originator. The usual prizes (Two Guineas and Half a Guinea) are offered for other remarks, written or uttered, which would appear not to belong to their real authors but to someone else. Quotations must be authentic and the names must be added.

Report from V. Sackville-West

Several competitors unfortunately had to be disqualified for their interpretation of the terms of the competition. " Remarks " were what was asked for, not lengthy quotations from prose or poetry. No doubt the response would have been more satisfying had I introduced the word " pithy " or " epigrammatic " into my definition. Still, many of the entries were ingenious and even informative. I liked, for instance, Quint's suggestion (which, apparently, is not his own) that our old friend

> I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing that I can do or any kindness that I can show any human being, let me do it now and not defer it, for I shall not pass this way again,

commonly attributed to R. L. Stevenson, may perhaps be ascribed to a French writer of the fifteenth century, and possibly translated by R.L.S. If so, Quint wants to know where in his writings it may be found.

Sterne's " God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," was the favourite example, all competitors placing it correctly in the *Sentimental Journey*, but not one of them recalling George Herbert's much earlier version in *Jacula Prudentum*:

" To a close-shorn sheep, God gives wind by measure."

Swift provided L. J. Basil with a valuable example from the *Tale of a Tub*, with " Bread . . . is the staff of life," though if he had quoted it in full instead of arranging it with dot, dot, dot, he might have found it less reminiscent of the New Testament. It should, of course, read, " Bread," says he, " dear brother, is the staff of life."

The prophet Isaiah also played quite a prominent part. Perhaps the most convincing attribution to him came from E. M. Stirling:

" The mists are at our feet, and the shadows of age encompass us," the actual source being Hazlitt's *Table Talk*.

Emerson also obtained frequent mention as the author of sayings which might readily be attributed to other men. In fact, he figures twice in one of the winning entries. It was not easy to decide between these two entries. If THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION awarded two first prizes instead of one first and one second, I should have liked to give a first each to Allan M. Laing and A.P.-R. At it is, I think Allan M. Laing must have the first and A.P.-R. the second.

FIRST PRIZE

i

Ignorance is not so damnable as humbug, but when it prescribes pills it may happen to do more harm.

ii

This age will serve to make a very pretty farce for the next, if it have any wit at all to make use of it.

iii

Great geniuses have the shortest biographies: their cousins can tell you nothing about them.

iv

I hope our young men will not grow into such *dodgers* as these old men. I believe everything a *young* man says to me.

v

When thou seest an Eagle, thou seest a portion of Genius: lift up thy head!

vi

I can reason down or deny everything, except this perpetual Belly: feed he must and will, and I cannot make him respectable.

POSSIBLE AUTHORS: i, Shaw; ii, " Erewhon " Butler; iii, Oscar Wilde; iv, Dr. Johnson; v, Carlyle; vi, " Anatomy-of-Melancholy " Burton.

REAL AUTHORS: i, George Eliot; ii, " Hudibras " Butler; iii, Emerson; iv, Benjamin Jowett; v, Blake; vi, Emerson.

ALLAN M. LAING

SECOND PRIZE

ALLEGED AUTHORS

1. " God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," King Solomon (Proverbs).
2. " Nature fits all her children with something to do." Beverley Nichols.
3. " Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just." The Bishop of Durham.
4. " Every schoolboy has that famous testament of Grunius Corocotta Porcellus at his fingers' end." Lord Macaulay.
5. " Wise men say nothing in dangerous times." Calvin Coolidge.

In unguarded moments:—

6. " I done believe in princerple; but O I DO in interest." Mr. Chamberlain.
7. " When I forget my sovereign, may my God forget me." His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The authors are:—(1) Sterne, (2) J. R. Lowell, (3) Jefferson, (4) Burton (Anatomy of Melancholy, Part iii, Sect. i, Mamb. i, Subs. i), (5) Selden, (6) J. R. Lowell (not a saying, but verse), (7) Lord Thurlow (to which Burke said, " The best thing that could happen to him! ")

A. P.-R.

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 281.—WEASEL'S BLANK CHEQUE

Some eight years after his marriage, I went to stay with Weasel. He has several children, no two of whom were born within twelve months of one another. He showed me a letter from his father-in-law, a retired Professor of Mathematics. It was accompanied by a blank cheque.

" Look at this," said Weasel. " The old fellow's nuts. Help me to fill in the cheque, will you, Caliban? "

This was the text of his father-in-law's letter:

" My dear Charlie,

" If you fill in the enclosed correctly—in accordance with the instructions that follow—it will be honoured by my Bank. If not, it won't.

" I want you to imagine that the cheque, which is for an exact number of pounds, is to be divided among certain of your children. Not all. Each boy among the recipients is to get (you must assume) either £1 or a multiple of £1; each girl is to get either £1 or a multiple of £1. But two recipients belonging to the same sex may not receive similar amounts.

" Moreover, if you have made the right assumptions, you will find that the number of ways in which the boys' share of the cheque can be partitioned among those participating, plus the number of ways in which the girls' share can be partitioned among those participating, is equal to three times the total number of participants; while the number of pounds for which the cheque is to be made out is equal to four times

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HOLIDAY SUGGESTIONS
continued on page 893

the total number of participants. And I think, my dear Charlie, that that is all you need to know.

"Yours to a surd,
"Euclides Popforth."

For what amount did we fill in Weasel's cheque?

PROBLEM 279.—OVERWORK

Sir Arthur Eddington's solution.

Since Pitchwell bowled the 1st over and the unfinished 26th over, he must have changed ends. Thus when Speedwell came off at the end of the 12th over, Tosswell bowled the 13th, Pitchwell the 14th, etc.

Tosswell's 5 maidens show that 31 runs were hit off him in 2 overs. The strokes were, therefore, 7 fours and 3 singles. Not more than 5 batsmen can have been concerned in them (3 in the over in which Tosswell took a wicket, and 2 in the other over). Thus 2 batsmen scored 2 fours; these were Bodkins and Perkins, no one else having reached 8.

Since Bodkins' 8 was hit off Tosswell, he played the first 12 overs without scoring. We can therefore write down at once the scores at the fall of the first few wickets, namely, 6, 12, 18, 23, . . . , provided in each case that the wicket fell before the 13th over. Pitchwell was bowling to Bodkins at the odd scores; thus wickets taken by him fell at even scores. The fourth wicket (Jenkins) which fell at an odd score was taken by Speedwell. The 13th over cannot begin before Speedwell has secured his one wicket.

Whilst Bodkins is not scoring no over can include more than one single. Therefore Speedwell's 6 overs, none of which were maidens, consist of 3 containing a four (*f*-overs), and 3 containing a single (*s*-overs). After an *f*-over Pitchwell bowls a maiden to Bodkins; since he bowled only 2 maidens, the third *f*-over must have been the 12th over. The fourth wicket fell after the four in the 12th over was scored; for if it fell earlier, 11 (at most) of the 23 runs came from Speedwell, so that 12 came from Pitchwell; that gives Pitchwell the impossible analysis of 6 overs, 0 maidens, 2 runs for his last 6 overs.

The 13th over opens with Bodkins (0) facing Tosswell, and Larkins (0) at the other end. Pitchwell's analysis to date is:

6 overs, 2 maidens, 8 runs, 3 wickets.

Since he has no more maidens, he gives away a single in each of his last 6 overs. Thus including the 3 singles off Tosswell (already noted) there are 9 singles to come. This is equal to the minimum number of singles contained in the scores of Meakins, Perkins, Simkins and Wilkins; thus Larkins' score was a four (not 4 singles).

If Tosswell began with a maiden, the next over was bowled by Pitchwell to Larkins, and the condition that Pitchwell's over contains a single cannot be satisfied. Therefore Tosswell began with an erratic over, which is easily seen to be 4, 4, W, 4, 1, 4.

In the 14th over, Meakins (5) faces Pitchwell, with Larkins (4) at the other end. Neither can take part in Tosswell's second erratic over since the batsmen then in scored fours off him. We must, therefore, fill up with maidens from Tosswell whilst Meakins slowly takes his score to 7, and gets out. This takes us to the 22nd over. The 23rd is Tosswell's second erratic over; and the rest of the innings is easily traced.

The following table shows the scoring strokes and wickets taken in each over:

Overs	Pitchwell	Speedwell	Overs	Tosswell	Pitchwell
1—2	4, 1	1	13—14	4, 4, W, 4, 1, 4	1
3—4	W, 1	4	15—16	M	W, 1
5—6	M	1	17—18	M	1
7—8	W, 1	4	19—20	M	1
9—10	M	1	21—22	M	W, 1
11—12	W, 1	4, W	23—24	1, 4, 4, 14	W, W, 1
			25—26	M	W

There are alternative possibilities (not affecting the answer) in the first 9 overs; the 23rd over may have been 4, 1, 4, 4, 1. The rest of the table is unique.

Jenkins fell to Speedwell, Bodkins to Tosswell, and Wilkins was not out. Score at the fall of each wicket: 6, 12, 18, 23, 31, 41, 44, 59, 59, 60.

PROBLEM NO. 278—GRINDGEAR'S REGISTRATION NUMBER

A set of Low's cartoons goes to: L. H. Stickland, 9 Ingledew Crescent, Leeds, 8.

Seven points are awarded.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10*s*. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope, but on separate sheets of paper.

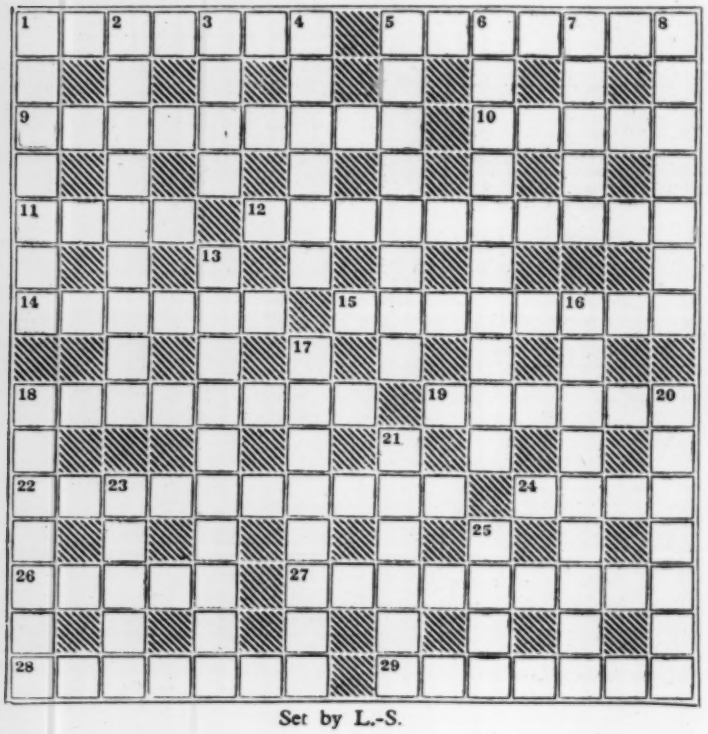
Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 428

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
Miss C. M. B. Stark, Summerford House, Falkirk

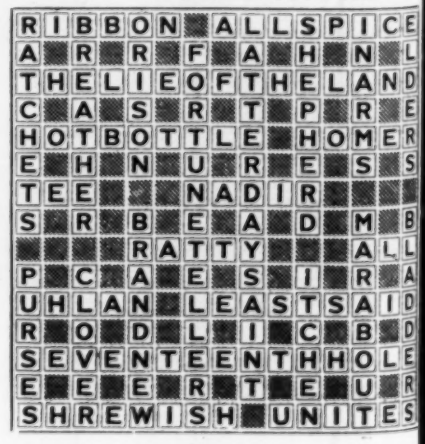
ACROSS

1. Often put to stud. (7)
5. Takes at least 2 bites at a cherry, no doubt. (7)
9. Vicious result of turning tail. (9)
10. Produced summary results. (5)
11. Singular effect when you leave 23. (4)
12. A spinning dance? (10)
14. Caused in cooking? (6)
15. The arm is tied up with laces. (8)
18. Result of cutting in on an arterial way. (8)
19. Poetically proficient. (6)
22. They are of course not long-winded musically. (10)
24. An informal period. (4)
26. The dog's other name was Bobby. (5)
27. It has sever-al uses. (9)
28. Gee! Two doctors are wanted. (7)
29. It's red. Stop! (7)

DOWN

1. Wild West intention of the bullying master. (7)
2. Would be at home at Oxford. (9)
3. The ancient Cardinal softly crept towards the centre. (4)
4. Tar and salt. (6)
5. The last drink to go to one's head. (8)
6. Mental kinks? (10)
7. Where people get stuck by the gate? (5)
8. They are employed in backing horses. (7)
13. Intellectually obstinate. (10)
16. Send a tree in exchange. (9)
17. He'd never see you off of course. (8)
18. Often a spare sleeper. (7)
20. Silencers for the pianist. (7)
21. A nun with a kid. (6)
23. Jungle weight. (5)
25. Should only be taken after sighting. (4)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD


RIBBON ALLSPICE
ARR F A H N L
THELIEOFTHELAND
CASR T P R E
HOTBOTTLE HOMER
EH N U R E S S
TEE NADIR
SR B E A D M B
RATTY AL L
PC A E S I R A
UHLAN LEASTSAID
RO D L I C B D
SEVENTEENTHHOLE
E E E R T E U R
SHREWISH UNITES

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Applications are invited for the post of Branch Librarian at the above Library. Candidates must possess the Certificate for the Diploma of the School of Librarianship, or, must have passed the Intermediate Examination of the Library Association. Salary £170–£12–£230. The successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination and to contribute to the Lancashire County Council's superannuation scheme. Applications, accompanied by copies of three testimonials, should reach the Director of Education, County Offices, Preston, endorsed "Library," not later than the first post on Saturday, 4th June.

£600 A YEAR—London post vacant for trained JOURNALIST, for press work in collaboration with the Public Relations Officer of a professional body. Duties include interviews with important people and preparation of statements for the press. An exacting and responsible job with pleasant people. University man preferred. Write Box 1645, L.P.E., 110 St. Martin's Lane, W.C.2.

WOMAN Secretary, graduate or high standard English. Socialist, required for literary and political post, State age, education, experience, political activities and salary required. Box 1833.

MAN (29), cultured, intelligent, adaptable, urgently seeks work. Part, whole time. Anything. Box 1844.

YOUNG man, interests literature philosophy, taking finals, desires secretaryship to man of similar interests. Time to write. Box 1814.

HOLIDAY-TUTOR. Czech woman graduate (Dr. Phil. French) seeks *au pair* position July–September. French, German coaching, shorthand, typing, swimming, tennis, etc. Box 1807.

EDUCATED woman, 29, 8 years' valuable all-round experience, in well-organised pre-prep. and nursery school, desires similar responsible post teaching or "mothering" side. September. Box 1794.

WOMAN graduate, artist, seven years teaching experience England, South Africa, seeks post in progressive school; junior work preferred. Classics, English, Art. Box 1831.

WELL-TRIED woman secretary (26), good-looking and capable, desires responsible post, preferably one with motoring attached. Salary £3. Box 1855.

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Miss Freeston, M.A. Oxon, Miss Nanco, B.A.Lond. and experienced staff, undertake coaching for University, School, and Civil Service examinations. (Men or women students.) Small groups for Matriculation, etc. Individual tuition in weak subjects. Modern language classes. English for foreigners. Reasonable charges. For prospectus, advice and list of recent successes, apply 2 Westminster Palace Gardens, Artillery Row, S.W.1 (beside the Army and Navy Stores). Interviews by appointment only. Tel.: Abbey 2976.

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BALLETS JOOSS
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SUMMER SCHOOL, 4th—31st AUGUST
Prospectus and full information may be obtained from the Secretary.

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Particulars from: THE SECRETARY, Anstey College, Erdington, Birmingham.

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Liquid
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In tins 9d. and 1/3
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"How to care for Silver and Plate"—sent on request to J. Goddard & Sons, Ltd. Dept. 35, Nelson Street, Leicester
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To Let and Wanted

19 CROSSFIELD ROAD, Swiss Cottage, N.W.3. Unfurnished. Spacious, newly decorated room, concealed basin, constant hot water. Superior house. Bathrooms, service if required. 25s. including electric light. Also small room, overlooking garden, at 10s. Primrose 6139.

COMING to London? Your own beautifully appointed service room from 5s. 6d. per night. Large doubles from 50s. per week. This includes baths and breakfast. 29 West Cromwell Road, S.W.5. 'Phone: Flax. 1181.

BLOOMSBURY. In a quiet cul-de-sac, one large comfortably furnished room to let at 26s. a week inclusive of cleaning, electric light, hot baths and linen. 15 Heathcote Street, W.C.1. Telephone: Terminus 3822 before noon or after 7 p.m.

SWISS COTTAGE. Really comfortable divan rooms, simply furnished and sanely decorated. Partial board from 35s. PRI 6466.

EXCEPTIONALLY good divan rooms, newly decorated, furnished. H. and c. Dining room. Garden. Close Tube, buses. Breakfast and dinner, from 2 gns. 80 Maida Vale, W.9. 'Phone: Maida Vale 1930.

UNFURNISHED. Swiss Cottage. Delightful, large sunny rooms, overlooking garden. Comfortable redecorated house. Service, meals, available. Ideal situation. 17s. 6d. to 25s. 16 Belsize Square. PRI. 6757.

TO let furnished, 1 service flat, bathroom, dressing room, suntrap, balcony overlooking garden, wooded slopes. Very full domestic service includes service of all meals (famous cuisine), central heating, constant hot water. Personal valeting service available, also garage. 3 *guineas* a week. Lawn Road, Flats, Belsize Park. Primrose 6054.

HOLLAND PARK. Modern rooms with breakfast, 21s. Constant hot water. Quiet house. 1 min. Central London Tube. 19 Clarendon Road. Park 7016.

LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS. Small attractive bed-sitting room in 3rd floor private flat to let furnished. With breakfast, 28s. Also comfortable attic, 20s. Phone before 11 a.m.: HOL. 4112.

AT 10 SUSSEX PLACE, off Sussex Gardens, Hyde Park, W.2. Modern newly furnished and decorated service rooms, from 25s. p.w. No extras. All meals optional. International. Padd. 8653.

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HAMPSTEAD. Business girl wishes another share comfortable flat, 25s. 'Phone: Ham. 2889 before 10 a.m., 7 to 8 p.m.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS
Rates, and all information on page 889

HOLIDAY SUGGESTIONS
continued from page 891.

RIVIERA. HOTEL DE LA MER, Cap Martin. Facing full south in own grounds direct on Sea. Buses to Menton and Monte Carlo. Pension 7s. inclusive.

SPRING and early summer on south coast of Brittany. Guests received in modernised house, 50 acres private grounds on sea near Concarneau. Open Easter to October. Bathing, fishing, boating, sailing. Excellent tourist centre; car. French conversation. 65 *frs.* MADAME CHAUVET, Stang Bihan, Beuzec Conq, Finistère.

PYRENEES. Anglo-French family would receive few guests in quiet comfortable country house. Write MME. DANNATT, Rébénacq (B. Pyr.), France.

MIEDERS-IN-STUBAI, Tirol; 3,100 ft. up, 10 m. Innsbruck, beautiful Alpine scenery. Excellent cuisine; English spoken and English library. Terms: Low season, 7s. 6d.; High, 8s.-8s. 6d. daily. Special arrangements parties. HERR BECK, Hotel Lerchenhof.

FINLAND FOR HOLIDAYS. 11 days for only £10. Write for free illustrated Handbook: N., FINNISH TRAVEL BUREAU, 7 Victoria St., London, S.W.1.

TOUR

SEE RUSSIA, Leningrad and Moscow. Escorted Tours leaves July 30th. 23 days—23 *gns.* Details, LESLIE LING, F.R.G.S., 28 Victoria St., London, S.W.1. (Abbey 2159.)

HOUSES, FLATS, PROPERTY, etc.
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WORTHING. Artistic detached house, large garden, close sea, to let furnished. 8 rooms, 2 baths, electricity, Ascot heater. 6 *gns.* Box 1727.

PROVENCE; 5-roomed country cottage to let furnished; gas, w.c., own grounds, swimming bath, 50 miles Cannes. 3 gns. weekly; reduction for long let. DUNCAN, Morwenstow, Cornwall.

SLOANE SQUARE, near. To let, small flat, unfurnished; 1 bedroom, 1 sitting, bath and kitchen. Very quiet, facing South, with balcony. Rent £120. Telephone (a.m.): Mayfair 6232.

CORNWALL. To let furnished, near Tintagel, well-equipped cottage, 2 sitting rooms, 4 bedrooms (sleep 5), bathroom (h. and c.), Cookanheat range, garden. Available last week June to end August. DR. TAYLOR, Vine House, Sevenoaks.

NOTTING HILL GATE. Comfortable maisonette to let till November; 3 bedrooms, Heal beds, piano. Moderate rent to careful tenants. Box 1843.

TO LET by business lady in private house, attractive furnished flat of 2 rooms and kitchen; bath, cons. hot water, every convenience; homely, clean and quiet; 5 mins. Baker St. Station, 2 mins. Regent's Park. 37s. 6d. p.w. 'Phone: WEL. 8106 or PRI. 5314.

SUSSEX. Farmhouse, very quiet, on private estate, to let unfurnished; 8 rooms, bath, garage, well water, no gas or electricity, lovely views. 25 Jubilee Place, Chelsea, S.W.3.

SPACIOUS, tastily furnd. s.c. flat, modern block; 5 mins. B.M. Vacant 3 months July 1st, possible extension. Box 1826.

TO LET, fully furnished, Aug. 21st, for 4 weeks, COTTAGE IN ESSEX, near Saffron Walden. Sleep 6, 2 sitting rooms, bath, w.c., telephone, garage, barn, etc.; 3 acres garden, orchard, field. Servants available. 2½ *gns.* p.w. Box 1862.

WOODLAND Retreat. Bungalow furnished, 2 rooms, kitchen, garage. £5 monthly. "The Kiln," Wisboro' Green, Billingshurst, Sussex.

WETHERSFIELD, Essex. Furnished Elizabethan cottage; 9 rooms, bath, telephone, garage. From 2½ *gns.* a week. BOGGIS, Cherry Gardens.

COTTAGE to let, June–July, Bucks; furnished, 4 beds, electric light. 30s. weekly. FLA. 4133.

SEAFORD. Detached modern house, let furnished any period, overlooking golf links and Downs. Sea 10 minutes; 6 rooms, sleep 5. All services, Ideal boiler, garage, garden. MRS. TICKELL, Strand-on-the-Green, W.4.

CATHERINE CARSWELL offers suitable tenant convenient 2-roomed flat near Regent's Park, part or whole summer, from June. 25s. weekly. Box 1842.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

OIL DIVIDENDS—GERMAN CAR COMPETITION—AUSTRIAN BONDS.

BUSINESS on the Stock Exchange this week could only be described as dismal and uninteresting, apart from the wild gamble in the 5s. shares of Western Holdings (now 13s. 6d.) on reports that an "extremely rich" goldfield has been found on its property in the Orange Free State. The political news from the Continent on the one hand and from the United States on the other was not encouraging for investment. The steadiest market outside the gilt-edged was in oil shares. The Burmah Oil dividend (30 per cent. for the year) and share bonus (one in two free) exceeded the best expectations of the bulls, and the shares jumped from 5⅞ to 6¼, before relapsing to 6. My estimate is that the shares are cheap below 6 and dear above 6½ cum dividend and bonus. The equivalent dividend on the increased capital is 20 per cent., but it is possible that the Company will maintain the regular dividend of 22½ per cent. (the additional 7½ per cent. this year being a cash bonus). These are the potential dividend yields at 6 and 6½, which are equivalent ex bonus and ex dividend to 3.865 and 4.199 respectively:

Burmah Oil.	On 20% dividend.	On 22½% dividend.
At 3.865	£5 14 3%	£6 8 6%
At 4.199	£5 5 0%	£5 18 3%

The yields are shown in all cases after allowing for Dominion income tax relief. On the 20 per cent. dividend basis it will be obvious that Shell Transport at 4½ to yield £6 9*s.* 9*d.* per cent. gross on a 20 per cent. tax-free dividend would be cheaper than Burmah Oil.

* * *

The dumping of motor cars into Great Britain is a serious threat to the manufacturers of British light cars, and in particular to the shareholders of Morris, Austin, Standard and Ford of England. The German Opel car (11.1 h.p. Treasury rating) sells in Great Britain for £135 retail and competes with the 12 h.p. Morris and Standard cars at £205 and with the Austin at £220. I am informed that the same car is retailed in Germany at RM. 2,010, which at the current rate of exchange is £170, and is billed to the British importer (General Motors) at about £65. In the first three months of this year 2,974 German motor cars were imported against only 295 in the first three months of 1937, an increase of 908 per cent. In fact, German cars accounted for about 50 per cent. of the total import of foreign cars in this period against only 6 per cent. of the total in the first three months of 1937. It is the first time that the foreign car has threatened the light car market which, thanks to the horse-power tax, has previously been the monopoly of the British manufacturer. When it is appreciated that 60 per cent. of the total car sales of Great Britain are cars of 10 horse-power or less, the shareholders of Ford, Morris, Austin and Standard may begin to feel worried. Here are the present prices and yields on British motor shares:

	Last Earnings.	Last Dividend.	Present Price.	Gross Yield.
	%	%		%
Ford Motor Co. £1 ..	5.7	5	18/3	£5 9 6
Morris Motors 5/- ..	55.5	45	27/-	£8 6 9
Austin Motors 5/- ..	79.2	50	24/-	£10 8 3
Standard Motor 5/- ..	37.2*	23½*	13/6	£8 12 9

* Equivalent earnings and dividend on increased capital.

Standard Motors must be regarded as the most speculative of the four, particularly as next year they are entering the small car field. Ford, of course, is not dependent on the British market as it has its foreign subsidiaries, but the German Opel car is threatening other markets besides Britain. In fact, whereas the subsidy to the German motor manufacturer exporting to Britain is about 43 per cent., it ranges up to 60 per cent. for other foreign markets. Morris is perhaps less vulnerable, having regard to its wider distribution of manufacture between private, commercial and armament vehicles, but I feel doubtful about the maintenance of its dividend at 45 per cent. Austin Motor shares are much more highly geared and the company can hardly be expected to maintain the ordinary dividend of 50 per cent. in view of the drop in motor car sales. I feel inclined to recommend an exchange from the Austin Motor ordinary shares into the 20 per cent. preferred ordinary shares of 10*s.*, which at 23*s.* 4½*d.* return a yield of £8 9*s.* 6*d.* per cent. If the dividend on the ordinary shares is cut from 50 per cent. to say 45 per cent. this exchange would give the shareholder an actual increase in income as well as greater protection of capital.

* * *

Holders of Austrian bonds can derive only qualified encouragement from the announcement that negotiations which are due to begin on Tuesday with regard to revising the 1934 Anglo-German Payments Agreement will include within their scope Austria's foreign loans. When Austria was annexed, the British Government deliberately refrained from impounding, as security for Austria's external liabilities, the sterling balances and gold held in London by the Austrian National Bank; and these assets passed into the hands of the German authorities. The City inferred that an understanding had been reached that the German Government would maintain the service of the Austrian debt, but the inference appears to have been incorrectly drawn. The German view seems to be that Austria is now a *Land* of the Greater Reich, and as such is governed by the law of June, 1933, which prohibits the direct transfer of interest on the foreign debts of states and municipalities, and provides that interest and sinking fund payments in marks must be made to the central Foreign Exchange Office. Transfers to foreign debtors require sanction by both the Reichsbank and the Minister for Economics. Default has already occurred in respect of two Austrian municipal issues in the United States. How far interest will be maintained on Austria's international obligations depends on the degree of pressure which creditor Governments can bring to bear. In her trade balance with Britain Germany has a substantial export surplus which could be blocked, if the British Government were prepared to take the necessary steps to establish a clearings mechanism. But that is a large proviso. Britain is guarantor for a quarter of the Austrian 4½ per cent. issue; and the British Government is in an uncomfortable position if insistence on the service of the sterling tranches leads to Germany's threatening complete default on the non-sterling tranches. I regard both the 4½ per cent. loan and the "Sevens" as still fully valued at £55½ and £38 respectively. The unhappy holders may as well face the fact that they have exchanged a poor but honest debtor for an adept and aggressive defaulter.

CO-OPERATIVE BANKING

The total resources of the C.W.S. Bank now exceed £109 millions; its annual turnover £770 millions; while the number of customers who avail themselves of co-operative banking facilities is over 114,000.

If you are interested call or write as below, when the fullest information will be supplied.

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West Blandford Street, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

Broad Quay, BRISTOL.

Head Office: 1 Balloon Street, MANCHESTER.

Company Meeting

PATALING RUBBER ESTATES

THE 18th Annual General Meeting of the Pataling Rubber Estates, Limited, was held on May 13th in London.

Mr. H. Eric Miller (the Chairman) said: With such satisfactory accounts before you it is a matter for regret that current prospects are much less favourable, for reasons which are, however, beyond our control. Aided, to a small extent, by purchased export rights, we accounted for a crop of over 4¼ million pounds, as against something over 2¾ million pounds in 1936. Including the unsold balance at a conservative valuation, our sale price averages 9.16*d.* per pound, and the "all in" cost was only fractionally higher than in 1936, increased wage rates to native labour being responsible therefor.

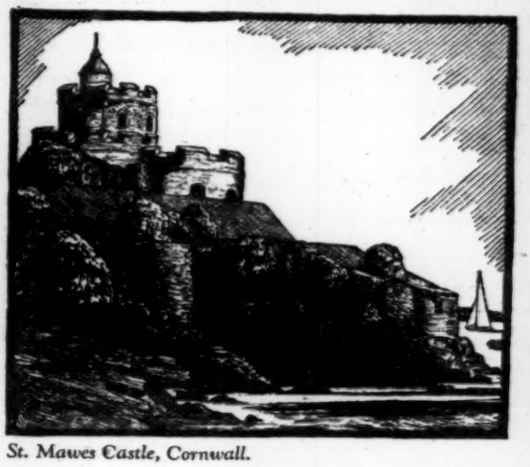
PROFIT AND DIVIDEND

The year's working resulted in a profit of £66,739—almost 22 per cent. on the issued capital. A final dividend of 7½ per cent. is recommended, making 15 per cent. for the year. The setback in the U.S.A. is having an adverse effect on our fortunes, and, although one hopes that a revival there will not be unduly delayed, one must under present unsettled conditions err on the side of safety.

As I have already indicated, 1938 results are likely to be leaner, but we did make some forward sales for 1938 shipment totalling 228 tons at a price of just under 11*d.* per pound, which looks an attractive figure to-day. I hope, however, that before we meet again next year there will be substantial improvement to record.

An event of some importance to the rubber industry is the paving of Lombard Street with the Gaisman improved Bramble block, the laying of which was completed last week. While it is not possible entirely to eliminate engine noise, the benefits which are likely to accrue to the frontagers from the damping-down of wheel noise and vibration should soon manifest themselves, and I am sure the attractiveness of this type of paving will receive wider recognition. The speedy and efficient completion of this job, following on the laying of Cornmarket Street, in Oxford, last year, has brought rubber road-paving from the experimental stage into the field of wider application on commercial lines. I have personally been a staunch advocate of this development, not solely in the interests of the rubber industry but in the hope that we might be spared some of the distracting noise and vibration arising from heavy motor traffic.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.



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W. M. Thackeray—"THE VIRGINIANS."

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CIGARETTES

10 FOR 8D
20 FOR 1/4
30 FOR 2/-
50 FOR 3/3

Handmade
20 FOR 1/6
Also obtainable in other packings

One expects to pay a little more for a cigarette of such excellent Quality

Company Meeting

BRITISH MATCH CORPORATION LIMITED

THE 11th Ordinary Annual General Meeting of the British Match Corporation, Ltd., was held on 18th May in London. Mr. Clarence E. Bartholomew, O.B.E., the chairman, presided, and said (in part): Before dealing with the Accounts, I must refer to the loss which we have sustained during the year by the death of Mr. Andrew Williamson—a man of great personal charm, and of exceptional business experience, which was always cheerfully placed at our disposal. He was one of those whose personal modesty almost concealed his great ability, and the influence which he exerted in a wide sphere.

We have elected Sir Ralph Glyn to fill the vacancy. We have gained in him a colleague who is unusually versed in affairs, and when we ask you to confirm his election, we ask you to assent to our view that he will add strength and experience to your Board.

Although the year's revenue does not constitute a record, we have had on the whole a satisfactory year. I must qualify this phrase because of the position in Brazil. Our friends in that wonderful country have again worked well and successfully, but since the sudden constitutional changes of November last, no dividends can be remitted. We can only hope that arrangements will be made by the Brazilian Government in the near future to enable those who have invested capital in Brazil to receive the very modest profits which the depreciated exchange allows them. Only last year I spoke of the improvement in Brazilian finances as having lessened our anxieties. These have now been increased once more, and—as a sincere friend of a land which ought to be rewarding those who have staked their money there in confidence and good faith—I trust that it will soon be found possible to restore that credit without which even naturally rich and prosperous countries cannot thrive. Otherwise, the year has been free from serious disturbances in our trade.

Our returns from the Home Trade, and from the British Dominions and the Argentine, are almost exactly the same as last year, but I must remind you that we have had to suffer the National Defence Contribution, as well as the extra 3*d.* on the Income Tax. These amounts paid by our Subsidiary Companies and ourselves total nearly £50,000 and, while we may presumably enjoy increased national security, we have no possible opportunity of earning extra profits.

With regard to this year's further increase in taxation, I will only express my fear that even Great Britain may be approaching the point where the high level of taxation will weaken our national finances, as it is already reducing our purchasing power. The decline in the yield from stamp duties must be considered as a red light. Artificially cheap money does not, apparently, create much new business.

I am not concerned, as your Chairman, with politics, and I am as eager as anyone that our defences shall be so strong that no one shall dare to attack our Homeland, and that our voice in favour of peace shall be heard with respect throughout the world, but I do wonder whether efficient steps are being—or, indeed, can be—taken to ensure that some of these many millions of expenditure are not being wasted. Can we feel confident that all the money which we pay is being used to the best advantage?

We have been warned in plain language to expect heavier burdens next year, and in the year after, and with such a prospect your Board can scarcely hold out hopes of increasing profits. We shall, indeed, account ourselves fortunate if we can keep up our present revenues, in view of the growing demands of taxation, not only here, but in other countries as well.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

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can help to secure safety at sea—

For 112 years British Life-boatmen have been saving human life daily. This magnificent work costs one million 5/- each year to maintain its traditional standard of service to humanity on the seas. Help to secure this safety at sea by sending a gift today.

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The EARL OF HARROWBY, Hon. Treasurer.
Lt.-Col. C. R. SATTERTHWAITE, O.B.E., Secretary.